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Fast Cheap

Persons

on Singing

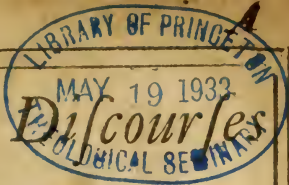
the Works

Music I. 28









Practical Discourses

OF
SINGING
IN THE
Worship of GOD;

Preach'd at the *Friday* Lecture in
EASTCHEAP.

By Several MINISTERS.

*Iſa. LII. 8. Thy Watchmen ſhall liſt up the
Voice, with the Voice together ſhall they ſing.*

L O N D O N;

Printed by J. Darby for N. Cliff at the *Golden
Candleſtick*, the lower End of *Cheapside*,
near the *Old Jury*; and J. Philips at the
Bull, next Door to the *Fleece-Tavern* in
Cornhil. M. DCC. VIII.

31 JAN 1870

PREPARE

FOR THE FUTURE

THE

ART OF

MANAGEMENT

OF

THE

ART OF

MANAGEMENT

OF

THE

ART OF

THE
PREFACE.

THE Duty of Singing
in the Worship of
God had been very
much neglected and unskilfully
perform'd among our selves,
in comparison of the greater
Knowledg and better Care of
the foreign Churches; till
some late Attempts were set on
foot to teach the Art, and in-
courage the Practice.

Among other Designs of this Nature, the Week-day Lecture, at which the following Sermons were preach'd, and that has been continu'd several Years for the Service of Religion, and particularly the Encouragement of Singing, has not been the least considerable, nor the least serviceable and successful.

And as we thought fit at some time or other to consider a Subject, as much neglected as the Practice, and as rarely handled as it was generally ill perform'd; so we thought it could be no where more proper than at such a Place. And tho they were first undertaken, and now publish'd at the Desire

fire of the Gentlemen that encourage and support it, and for their particular Use; yet we think our selves concern'd to declare, That as we profess to follow the Guidance of no other Spirit but that of God, nor to be of any Party but that of all serious Christians; so they are sincerely directed to the common Benefit, and have no lower or more confin'd an Aim, than the Satisfaction and Assistance of all the Serious and Sincere.

Many of our Reverend Fathers imploy'd excellent Pains in the several Volumes of the Morning-Lectures that were devoted to the Service of Practical Religion, instead of meddling with the angry Dis-

putes, and the hurtful Quarrels of the Times ; and have been very useful to the World : and we thought it no way improper or unsutable to the Character and Circumstance of younger Ministers, to be willing to serve so excellent an Interest ; and hope we may move in this lower Sphere without any just Censure.

It will be necessary to observe, That tho the present Discourses may not be so uniform and of a Piece, or wrought off with so even a Thred, as if compos'd by a single Hand ; like the different Colourings of several Hands in a Picture : yet they have upon that Account their Advantage and

and Convenience too. For tho the same things happen sometimes to be said by several, yet they are always directed to a different Purpose, and expressed in a different Manner. And it may be some Gratification to the innocent Curiosity, as well as some Help to the real Benefit of the serious Reader, to see the same things held in a different Light, and cloth'd in a different Dress; and may give the greater Advantage to the Evidence and Beauty of Divine Truth. So that what is wanting in the Symmetry of Parts, or Equality of Stile, is made up in the Pleasure of Variety; like the grateful Confusion of different Flowers

*Flowers in a pleasant Field,
or the pleasing Harmony arising
from the Composition of
several Sounds.*

*We shall only add, That if
we had known any thing so
distinctly writ upon the Sub-
ject, form'd out of the Scrip-
ture, and fitted for common
Use, we should have thought
the present Undertaking the
less necessary. And we are
willing to hope it may not be
wholly fruitless, and without
Success, as we earnestly desire
it may be attended with the
Divine Blessing.*

London, Feb. 13.

1707.

THE

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PAG. 23. lin. penult. for $\delta\eta$ read $\Delta\eta$.
 24. lin. 6. for $\chi\theta\eta\iota\alpha$ read $\chi\theta\eta\iota\alpha$.
 102. r. 117.

BOOKS Printed for and Sold
by *John Phillips*, at the *Black
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or to Reward by its Union with the
Divine Baptismal Spirit; wherein is
prov'd, that none have the Power of
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Sacramental Exercises. or the Christian's Employment, before, at, and after the Lord's Supper. To which is added a Discourse of Hearing, being a Farewel-Sermon, preach'd in *Lime-street*, Septemb. 29. 1706. By *Jabez Earle*.

T H E

THE
NATURE

Of the DUTY of
SINGING.

SERMON I.

COL. III. 16. — *Teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs; singing with Grace in your Hearts to the Lord.*

Designing to give some Account of the Nature of Singing, consider'd as a Branch of Christian Worship, by way of Introduction

Serm. I. *tion* to the following Discourses, I have chosen these Words as the Foundation of what I have to offer upon that Matter, and shall in a few words shew their Relation to the Context.

In the foregoing Chapters the Apostle asserts the great Truths of the Gospel, and in this begins a practical Exhortation, grounded upon what he had been there establishing : From the Consideration of what he had there said, pressing Heavenly-mindedness and Mortification, from *Verse 1. to 12.* from whence to the *16th*, he urges to the particular Dutys of Charity, Peace and Thankfulness ; and as a Means in order hereto directs the diligent Study of the Scriptures, which duly entertain'd

2 Tim. III.
16.

are able to make us *wise unto Salvation* ; and particularly enjoins the *Singing of Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*, as tending to promote the Interest of Holiness in our Hearts and Lives..

In the Words we have the Act, the Object, the Manner, and the End of the mention'd Duty ; from the
joint

joint Consideration whereof we *Serm. I.*
may form a Definition of it, as
exact as we are concern'd to have.

I. The *Act* is *Singing*; the general Notion of which is *speaking musically*: and I should but abuse your Patience in detaining you, while I insisted more largely upon a matter which is so obvious to the meanest Understanding.

II. The *Object* is *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*. How these are distinguish'd I cannot tell, and shall not trouble you with the Opinions of others. In this they all agree, That they are Words so compos'd, as to be fit for Singing; which is the proper Notion of what we call *Verse* or *Metre*.

But tho' the Object of Singing in general be *Poetical Composures*, or *Words* set to Tunes, I need not tell you that the Object of Singing, as it is an Act of Religious Worship, is *Divine* and *Spiritual Songs*, *i. e.* Composures which contain a Divine or Spiritual Sense, whose subject Matter is God, his Nature,

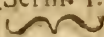
Serm. I. Perfections, and wonderful Works, according to the Discovery which he has made of himself in his Word, which we call the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament.

And I conceive that whatever Songs are Scriptural are the proper Object of Singing, as it is under present Consideration; especially those which treat of Christ and the Benefits of his Redemption. For I can by no means be of their mind, who in the public Congregations would confine us to that Collection of the *Jewish Psalmody*, which is call'd the *Psalms of David*, for Reasons which I must not give, because I am not allow'd to invade another's Province. I come next,

III. To the *Manner* of Singing; and tho what I have here to propose will fall under the Consideration of him whose business it is to give Directions, yet I am necessarily oblig'd to mention some things under this Head, because in all Moral and Religious Actions the

the Duty of SINGING.

5

the *Manner* of Performance is an *Serm. I.*
essential Part, and the Neglect of 
it will, in the sight of God, de-
nominate that Trifling and Hypo-
crisy, which Men would have pass
for Divine Service or Worship.
Therefore,

§. 1. It must be *with Grace in the*
Heart. There must be a Concur-
rence of Heart and Voice. God
does indeed require the *Calves of Hos. XIV.*
the Lips, but *mere Praises* will not
be an acceptable Sacrifice. There-
fore *David* calls upon his *Soul* to
bless the Lord, and *all that was Ps. CIII. 1.*
within him to bless God's holy Name.
Agreeably to which the Apostle
directs, that we should *make melody Eph. V. 19.*
in our Hearts to the Lord. And
indeed it is a rul'd Case, that *bo- 1 Tim. IV.*
dily Exercise profiteth little. Now 8.
Singing with **Grace** in the Heart
may imply as follows:

(1.) That he that sings be a
gracious Person, or a good Man.
We know that God heareth not Sin-
ners, is a Maxim applicable to the
present Case. *The Prayer of the*
Wicked is an Abomination, and his
Praises can't be acceptable. Yea,

Serm. I. it must needs be a provoking thing
 ~~~~~ to a holy and jealous God, for  
 those to sing his Praises that de-  
 pise his Government, and hate his  
 Laws. Such People do but *lye unto*  
*him with their Mouths, and flatter*  
*him with their Lips.* And even a  
 Man of common Discretion would  
 less resent the Curses of an Ene-  
 my, than open and notorious Flat-  
 tery. It is mocking and insulting  
 the great God, for Men at once  
 to praise his Name, and live in an  
 habitual Defiance of him. It is a

PS. XXII. *Holy God that inhabits the Praises*  
 3. *of Israel: and therefore we should*  
*resolve as David did, I will wash*

PS. XXVI. *my hands in Innocence, and so will I*  
 6, 7. *compass thine Altar, O Lord: That*  
*I may publish with the Voice of*  
*Thanksgiving, and tell of all thy*  
*wondrous Works.*

(2.) It must be in the lively  
 Exercise of particular *Graces*; as,

[1.] *Knowledg.* A Man must  
 understand and actually consider  
 what he says, when he sings the  
 PS. XLVII. *Praises of God: Sing ye Praises*  
 7. *with Understanding.* Otherwise  
 what he does is no more an Act  
 of

of Worship or Devotion, than *Serm. I.*  
the Noise of a musical Instrument. ~~~~~  
He is properly but *as sounding* *1 Cor. XIII*  
*Brass, and a tinkling Cymbal.*

[2.] *Faith.* For without Faith it  
is impossible to please God. And he *Heb. XI. 6.*  
that comes to him must believe that  
he is, and that he is a Rewarder of all  
them that diligently seek him.

[3.] *Love.* This is the first and  
great Commandment, Thou shalt love *Mat. XXII.*  
the Lord thy God with all thy Heart,  
&c. Accordingly it is to be re-  
garded as the Spring of all accep-  
table Obedience: and surely Praise  
must be a cold and nauseous thing,  
if it don't flow from a Heart fill'd  
with Gratitude and sincere Affec-  
tion. If there be'n't inward De-  
sire, Delight, and Admiration,  
Songs of Praise are empty and in-  
significant Things; especially con-  
sidering that God is not to be  
impos'd upon: but *all things are* *Heb. IV.*  
*naked and open in his sight with whom*  
*we have to do.*

[4.] *Humility.* Tho Custom  
has not made it usual to kneel in  
Singing as in Praying, yet an e-  
qual Prostration of Soul becomes



Serm. I. us in both, considering what an infinite Distance there is between us and the Object of our Songs, and how *he is exalted far above all Blessing and Praise, the Hallelujahs of the Angels as well as the Hosannahs of the Saints*: Especially remembering that we are Sinners, and so deserve to be in that place where the Circumstances of the miserable Inhabitants extort *weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth*, instead of Praise and joyful Acclamations.

§. 2. It must be in the *Name of the Lord Jesus Christ*; *ver. 17. Giving thanks unto the Father by him.* Parallel to this is that of the Apostle, *Unto him be Glory in the Church by Christ Jesus.* The Import of this Expression is, that our Praises must be offer'd up to God thro the Mediation of Christ, whose Intercession procures Acceptance for our Praises as well as Prayers. The same Hand must present, and the same Incense perfume both.

Eph. III.  
21.


IV. The

IV. The *End* of Singing is twofold : The Glory of God, and mutual Edification.

§. 1. The *Glory* of God. This is the ultimate End of a Christian in all his Actions, and especially Religious ; *Whoso offereth Praise, glorifies me.* I need not tell you, that we can't make God more glorious than he is necessarily, essentially, and eternally ; but by praising God, we acknowledg and proclaim his Glory.

§. 2. *Mutual Edification* ; and particularly,

(1.) *Instruction and Admonition : Teaching and admonishing one another, &c.* Now this End is admirably answer'd by Psalms, Hymns, and Songs, in which important Truths are many times most agreeably propos'd, more easily impress'd, and better remember'd than otherwise. Upon which account it has been usual in all Ages, even those most remote from the present time, and in all places where there has been any Religion profess'd, or publick

Serm. I. Worship paid to a Superior Being,  to deliver what they counted sacred Mysterys in Verse, and to set that Verse to Tunes. But this needs not be insisted on.

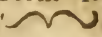
(2.) *Comfort.* According to that, *Is any man afflicted? let him pray: Is any merry? let him sing Psalms.*

But as all these things will fall in under other Heads, I am allow'd only to mention 'em; and that seems sufficient to answer my Design, which was to show the Nature of the Ordinance.

From what has been said, I might draw several useful Inferences; but considering that my Discourse is but introductory to the rest, I shall only mention two or three things, to which the General Heads fairly lead me: As,

1. That our Singing should be as *musical* as may be: For tho' where God has deny'd a Voice or an Ear, he will not require what he has not given, yet surely we should serve him with the best we have, and improve every Talent to the best advantage, seeing we must



must account for it: and we may Serm. I.  
imagine what the Consequences of   
our Neglect will be, if we consider  
that awful Text, *Cursed be the De-Mal. I. 14.*  
*ceiver which hath in his Flock a Male,*  
*and voweth and sacrificeth unto the*  
*Lord a corrupt thing.* Indeed our  
best shall be accepted, be it ever  
so mean; but nothing less shall  
be regarded, be it ever so good.  
And the Reason is obvious; be-  
cause to put off God with any  
thing short of the best, must needs  
be a high Affront to him, who is  
infinitely exalted *above all Blessing*  
*and Praise*, and deserves infinitely  
better from us than our best can  
be. It's true, the Musick of our  
Voice is a matter of less impor-  
tance than the Melody of our  
Heart, but not therefore to be  
neglected; because a very minute  
Circumstance may be expressive of  
a great deal of Duty or Disobe-  
dience, as sufficiently appears in  
the Case of our first Parents. In  
a word, I may apply to the pre-  
sent Case that of our Lord in ano-  
ther; *These ought ye to have done, Luke XI.]*  
*and not left the other undone:* and 42.

lay

Serm. I. lay the stress of what I have said  
 upon that of the Apostle, *Glorify*  
 1 Cor. VI. *God in your Body, and in your Spi-*  
 20. *rits, which are his.*

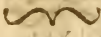
2. If the Object of Singing is  
 Scriptural Songs, then undoubtedly  
 we must not mingle our own  
*Inventions, Fancys, and private*  
*Opinions, with the great and ob-*  
*vious Truths of the Gospel, in*  
*those Composures which we sing*  
*in the Worship of God. And I*  
*think this sufficiently intimated in*  
*the Text; Let the Word of Christ*  
*dwell in you richly, teaching and ad-*  
*monishing one another in Psalms,*  
*Hymns, and spiritual Songs. If men*  
*don't in every Ordinance keep to*  
*this Rule, to the Law and to the*  
*Testimony, their Sacrifices cannot*  
*be acceptable, but must fall under*

Mar. XV. 9. *that Censure, In vain do they wor-*  
*ship me. And this is one Abomi-*  
*nation in the Church of Rome, that*  
*they sing not only what is un-*  
*scriptural, but antiscritural too,*  
*yea infinitely absurd and ridicu-*  
*lous; as I might shew by Instances*  
*enough to enlarge this Discourse*  
*into a Volume.*

Tu per  
 Thomæ  
 San-  
 gem, &c.

3. If

3. If the Manner of Perfor-Serm. I.  
mance be *with Grace in our Hearts,* then we must see to it that we be sincerely *devoted* to that God whose Praises we sing, and not sing the *Lord's Songs* with unhallow'd Lips. We must also endeavour to have every Grace (as before mention'd) in its proper and lively Exercise, and tune our Hearts as well as Voices. We must offer a reasonable Service, *understand* and attend to the Sense of what we sing, lest we be no *wiser than the Fowls* Job  
*of the Heaven,* who sing they know XXXV. 11  
not what. We must set our selves as in the *Presence* of the All-seeing God, that a Sense of his Inspection may awe us into a decent Reverence, and make us watch against every thing unsutable to the Solemnity of Worship, and impertinent to the Business before us: Believing and being firmly persuaded, that as we must account for every Action in general, whether good or bad, so in a very particular manner for every Act of Worship; and that of every *idle Word* we must give an account  
*in*

Serm. I. *in the Day of Judgment to him who*  
 *taketh no pleasure in Fools. Let us*  
*have an eye to the Recompence of Re-*  
*ward, as those who believe that*  
*the Care and Pains we take in the*  
*lowest Instance of Duty, shall in no*  
*wise lose its Reward. Let us think*  
*with our selves, that while we*  
*are conscientiously singing the Prai-*  
*ses of God in his Church below,*  
*we are training up for that better*  
*World, where everlasting Joy shall*  
*be upon our Heads, and our Mouths*  
*eternally fill'd with the high Prai-*  
*ses of our God; and not forget*  
*to consider what a dreadful thing*  
*it will be, to have our Crys and*  
*Wailings in Hell receive a higher*  
*Accent from our Hypocritical*  
*Songs of Praise on Earth. Let us*  
*also see to it, that we sing the*  
*Praises of God in the Exercise of*  
*Holy Love, that every Breath be*  
*warm'd with that holy Flame, and*  
*a devout Aspiration attend every*  
*Word we utter. Thus David be-*  
*gins that lofty Song of Praise,*  
*Psal. XVIII. I will love thee, O Lord,*  
*my Strength: and so should every*  
*Psalm of Praise we sing, deserve*  
the

the Title of a *Song of Loves*. Thus Serm. I.  
will the Imployment be delightful  
to our selves, and grateful to God; *Psalm XLV.*  
*Chear the Heart both of God and* *Title.*  
*Man.*

Finally, Let us join *Humility* to  
the other Graces, remembering  
what a Majesty we approach,  
what unworthy Creatures we are,  
and how sorry things our Offerings  
be. Herein imitating those glori-  
ous Creatures, with whom we one  
day hope to join in eternal Hallelu-  
jahs; who *cover their Faces and Feet*, *Isa. VI. 2, 3.*  
when *they cry, Holy, Holy, Holy*  
*Lord God, &c.*

And this Humility will make us  
come in the *Name* of Jesus, under  
a sense of our own Unworthiness,  
and a Persuasion that the Holy  
God can accept of nothing from  
the hands of such abominable  
Wretches as we are, but thro the  
Merits and Intercession of him,  
*whom the Father heareth always.*

4. From what has been said of  
the End, we may infer our Oblig-  
ation to aim at the *Glory* of God  
in this Duty; that we do it to  
*the Lord*: That we despise and  
abhor



Serm. I. abhor the Thoughts of driving  
 ~~~~~ on any base or mean Designs under the cover of the choicest Devotion: That we don't *for a pretence* multiply our Songs of Praise, as the Pharisees lengthen'd out their Prayers, lest we *receive*, as they, *greater Damnation*.

And seeing mutual Edification is another End we are to aim at, I shall here take leave to advise that our Singing be with a distinct and *audible* Voice, without which it should seem that End can't be answer'd. How can Men be affected with an indistinct Murmur, or how shall they know we do really join in praising God, while we speak only to our selves? Indeed the Heart may be right, and God principally regards *its* Melody: but unless we sing (as far as the Nature of the thing will bear) so as to be understood by others, or to have them satisfy'd that we go along with them; I may justly apply what the Apostle speaks against praying in an unknown Tongue, We *speak into the*

the Air: Our Spirit indeed sings, Serm. I. but our Understanding is unfruitful. We should therefore sing with the Spirit, and sing with Understanding; i.e. so as to be understood by others. And therefore as we should be cautious not to confound others by an unseemly Noisiness, so we should extend our Voice to the most convenient degree we are able; and not under a Pretence of Modesty baulk the great End of the Institution. The Levites prais'd the Lord, the God of Israel, with a loud Voice on high; and Paul and Silas sung so loud, that the Prisoners heard 'em.

1 Chron. XX. 19.

Acts XVI. 25.

5. To conclude: If God in this, as well as other Ordinances, looks so much to the Heart, and expects to be worship'd *in Spirit and in Truth*, what need have we to watch our own Spirits, and pray for his? We had need take all the Pains, and use all the Application possible; and finding all that insufficient, we must have recourse to a better Strength than our own, praying that our Hearts may

Serm. I. may be set in Tune by the *Finger of God*; and joining with the Psalmist, say, *Open thou my Lips, and my Mouth shall shew forth thy Praise.*

ARGU-

ARGUMENTS *for the*
Duty of SINGING.

SERMON II.

PSAL. CV. 2.

Sing unto him, sing Psalms unto him.

THE Occasion of this Psalm may be gather'd from 1 Chron. XVI. 7. there we find it was put into the hands of *Asaph and his Brethren* by *David*: They had brought the *Ark* of God into its Resting-place, and then gave out themselves to the view of a long and quiet Settlement. We may observe this, that it was first admitted as a Part of Worship with

Serm. II. with the nearest regard to their own Felicity, and afterwards embody'd in the Collection of *Psalms*, that it might be of universal Service. This, I think, is very clear under the Protection of this one Argument, *viz.* That the Song which we read entire in the Book of *Chronicles*, is broke and divided to make up several Parts of *Psalms*, that seem to be more unconfin'd and popular. The beginning of it we meet with in this CVth Psalm, what follows is dispos'd of into the XCVth; one Verse lies often in our way, particularly in the CXVIIIth and CXXXVIth, and well it may, for it is the Summary of Praise; *Give Thanks to God, for he is Good, for his Mercy endures for ever.* The concluding Petition is the same with what you find in the CVIth Psalm; and the Doxology, the close of Joy, we meet with both here and in another Psalm that is compos'd with a direct view of that Mediator, who *took upon him the Seed of Abraham.* The same devotional Language which they us'd


us'd at bringing home the Ark, *Serm. II.*
 serves an higher purpose, and is
 the breathing of Faith and Joy to
 him who was *greater than the Tem-
 ple.* This will appear if you unite
Psal. LXXII. 18, 19. in the same
 view with *Psal. CVI. 48.* These
 things will vindicate our Applica-
 tion of an Old Testament Advice
 to these *last days*, in which God is
speaking to us by his Son. 'Tis true,
 there's the distance of a great ma-
 ny Ages between the Time of such
 Exhortation and ours, *upon whom
 the ends of the Earth are come*; but
 it reaches us without any Decay or
 Waste of Argument, and I will
 dare to deliver it in those Terms
 to every one that's *Partaker of the
 Heavenly Calling*; *Arise, for the
 matter belongs unto thee.*

This is the Design that I have
 in the choice of this Text, and
 that you had in directing me to a
 part of Service among you; I'm
 to establish the Truth and Obliga-
 tion of a great Ordinance, and
 show what a rightful Claim it has
 upon those who would *walk worthy
 of God unto all pleasing.* SINGING
 his

Serm. II. his Praise appears to be a Duty
 ~~~~~ from these four Springs of Argument; The Light of Nature, The Commands of the Word, The Examples of God's People, and The Work of the Holy Spirit within us.

I. It may be prov'd from that *natural* and common *knowledge* of things which God has bestow'd upon Mankind at large. Revelation produces it in a better Light, and strikes deeper into the Conscience; but yet the Duty it self is of a more diffusive kind, and takes the same Compass with human Reason. I will mention three things under this Head, which will fill up the Argument.

§. I. 'Tis promoted by those *Works* of Greatness and Mercy that lie open to an universal Remark. *David* calls in the Heathen World to bear a Part in this great Con-  
 P. CXVII sort; *Praise him all ye Nations, praise him all ye People.* 'Tis a common Duty, and includes the whole rational Nature: *Let the Nations be glad and sing for Joy.*  
 ——— Let

— *Let the People praise thee O God, Serm. II.*  
*let all the People praise thee. Tho*   
*the Mysterys of Redemption are* Ps. LXVII.  
*unknown among 'em, so that they* 4, 5.  
*cannot think of God's loving kind-* Psal.  
*ness in the midst of his Temple; yet* XLVIII. 9.  
*Creation and Providence give 'em*  
*the Memorials of a Deity, and*  
*those may touch their Joys in a*  
*fainter way: for according to God's* Ver. 10.  
*Name, so is his Praise to the Ends of*  
*the Earth, and his right Hand is*  
*full of Righteousness. What may be* Rom. I. 19,  
*known of him is manifest in them,* 20.  
*for he has shown it to 'em; and the*  
*invisible things of him from the Cre-*  
*ation of the World are clearly seen by*  
*the things that do appear, even his*  
*Eternal Power and Godhead. This*  
*is so noble an Argument to the*  
*Work of Praise, that their Si-*  
*lence falls under a severe Correc-*  
*tion; they are said to be without* Ver. 21.  
*Excuse, because that when they knew*  
*God, they glorify'd him not as God.*

Nature taught the Heathens to  
sing the Praises of their Gods:

Δεῦτε δὴ ἐννέπετε σφέτερον πατέρ' ἡμεῶν.

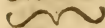
ὑμνεῖσθαι,

Ἔργα—

ὑμνεῖτε Θεογονία,



Serm. II.



Theocrit.

Idyl. 2.

v. 10.

ὑμνεῦται Δία τ' αἰγρόχρον καὶ πότ-  
νιαν Ἥρω.

————— Ἀλλὰ Σελάννα  
φαῖνε κελόν. τὴν γὰρ ποταείσμαι  
ἄσυχχα, δ' αἶμον  
τᾷ χερσὶν αὖτ' ἐκάτα. —————

De Musi-  
ca.

*Plutarch* says, That Singing and Musick among the antient *Greeks* were wholly imploy'd in the Worship of their Gods; and laments their Profanation and Abuse in later times when they brought 'em into the Theater.

Εἰ γὰρ νῦν

εἵχομεν

ἀλλὰ τι

ἔδει ημᾶς

ποιεῖν καὶ

κοινῇ καὶ ἰ-

δία, ἢ ὑμ-

νεῖν τὸ

θεῖον, &amp;c.

Arriani

Epict. l. 1.

c. 16.

'Tis an admirable Expression of the *Stoick* Philosopher: “ If we  
“ are wise, what is more properly  
“ our Business, in publick and  
“ private, than to sing Praises to  
“ the Deity? Should not the La-  
“ bourer in the Field and at his  
“ Table sing an Hymn to God? If  
“ I were a Nightingal, I would do  
“ as the Nightingals do; if a  
“ Swan, as the Swans: but since I  
“ am a reasonable Creature, God  
“ must be prais'd by me; I will  
“ never forsake the Practice my  
“ self, and I exhort all others to  
“ it.

The



The *Apostate* Emperor speaks *Serm. II.*  
of fine *Hymns* consecrated to  
the Gods, and advises them to be  
learn'd and remembred. *Juliani Opera, p. 301.*

Many of the Scripture-Songs  
are rais'd upon a view of what  
God has done in Nature, things  
expos'd to an universal Admira-  
tion. *David* considers the *Hea-* *Psal. VIII.*  
*vens* as the *Work of his Fingers*, the *3, 4.*  
*Moon and the Stars* that he had or-  
dain'd; and then says, *Lord, what* *Job XXVI.*  
*is Man?* 'Tis true, these are only *14.*  
part of his ways, and we cannot see *2 Cor. IV.*  
the *Glory of God* to any saving ad-  
vantage, but in the face of *Jesus*  
*Christ*: however there are some  
Beams of Perfection shining out to  
them, who are *Aliens from the Co-*  
*venant of Promise*. For the *Hea-*  
*vens* declare the *Glory of God*, and *Psal. XIX.*  
the *Firmament* shows his handy *Work.* *1, 2, 3, 4.*  
*Day* unto *Day* utters *Speech*, and  
*Night* unto *Night* shows *Knowledg.*  
There is no *Speech* or *Language* where  
their *Voice* is not heard; for their  
*Line* is gone thro' all the *Earth*, and  
their *Words* unto the end of the  
*World*. These are not so limited  
as the *Statutes* that he gave to *Isaac*,  
C and

Serm. II. *and the Commandments that were*  
 ~~~~~ *only made known to Israel. In-*  
deed they are a People most oblig'd
and prepar'd to the Service; but
the Duty reaches further, and Da-
vid owns this when he was solem-
nizing the peculiar Relation that
God bore to the Jews. The XCVth
Psalms is a part of the Song that
he gave out at the settling of the
Ark, and yet then he looks be-
 ps. XCVI. *yond their own Nation: Fear be-*
 9, 10. *fore him all the Earth; say among*
the Heathen, that the Lord reigneth:
the World also shall be establish'd,
that it be not mov'd. They under-
stand, tho it be not by the clearer
 Heb. XI. 3. *views of Faith, that the Worlds were*
fram'd by the Word of God; so that
the things that are seen were not
made of things that do appear. And
further,

They behold that part of his
 wonderful Works, which is most
 affecting to themselves. The Apo-
 stle comes down upon the Hea-
 thens Level, when he tells 'em of
 the Times in which God suffer'd all
 A&. XIV. *Nations to walk in their own ways,*
 16, 17. *and yet even then left not himself*

without witness, but gave 'em Rain Serm. II.
and fruitful Seasons, filling their
Hearts with Food and Gladness. So
 that if we had no express Voice
 of Law or Gospel to make this
 our Duty, 'tis as much establish'd
 in the Rules of Nature as Prayer
 and Dependence upon God can be;
 and this is the Work of *all Nations* Act. XVII.
of Men, who dwell on all the Face 26, 27, 28.
of the Earth, that they should seek
the Lord, if haply they might feel
after him, and find him, tho he be
not far from every one of us: for in
him we live, and move, and have
our Being. For this the Apostle
 brings in one of their own Poets,
 who said, *We are his Offspring.*

Necessity has this Virtue in it,
 to set us a crying after him, tho
 we should always have bin at a
 loss for the true Method of do-
 ing it, if *Life and Immortality*
 had not come to *Light by the Gospel*;
 yet every Admonition of Misery
 is a push to the thing it self. The
 Mariners who had got *Jonah* a-
 board were as loose and wild in
 their Notions of Worship as Peo-
 ple could be, when they cry'd every

Serm. II. *Man to his God*; but yet they have

some unpolish'd Thoughts of their
 Jon. I. 5. Duty: They had an Opinion of
 Prayer as a way to escape. Thus

Rom. II. *the Gentiles, who have not the Law,*
 14, 15. *do by nature the things contain'd in*
the Law; and these, having not the
Law, are a Law unto themselves,
which show the Work of the Law to
be written in their Hearts. 'Tis the
 Parallel between one Ordinance
 and another, that I wou'd argue
 from: If mere Nature that sur-
 veys the Beauty of Creation and
 Providence, can show a God to
 our Hope in the *time of need*, it
 does equally oblige us to praise
 him for Mercys receiv'd. The
 Materials of the Service lie abroad,
 and may be fetch'd in from the
 common Favours of Life; for as

Job *God our Maker he gives Songs in the*
 XXXV. 10. *Night.*

§. 2. This Duty is distinguish'd
 from those that were Ceremonial,
 and only a *shadow of good things to*
come. The *Jews* had their Law in
Tables, but their Gospel in *Figures*.
 Many parts of their Service were
 to declare and nourish the hopes of

a Messiah. The Adoption that per-Serm.II.
tain'd to 'em, the Glory, the Cove-
nants, the giving of the Law, and the Rom. IX.
Promises, was because they were a
People, of whom as concerning the
Flesh Christ came. These had no
further value in them than as they
were establish'd by a temporary
Command, and pointed to that ri-
per Glory, those better things that Heb. XI.
God had reserv'd for us. But the ult.
Works that are purely moral are
oftentimes mention'd apart from
them; and when these two are
put into the Ballance, the Cha-
racter always weighs on one side:
The Lord has not so great Delight, Sam.
in Burnt-Offering and Sacrifice, as XV. 22.
in obeying the Voice of the Lord:
behold, to obey is better than Sacrifice,
and to hearken than the Fat of Rams.
When he supposes an awaken'd
Conscience lamenting how insuffi-
cient Thousands of Rams, and Ten Mic. VI.8.
Thousand Rivers of Oil would be,
he puts a new credit upon those
parts of Obedience that are ever-
lasting and moral: He has shown
thee, O Man, what is good, and what
the Lord thy God requires of thee.

Serm.II. Of this kind are those Praises that we offer to him in the Ordinance of Singing. This is the plain sense of *David*, tho he liv'd in an Age when the Ceremonial Commands had all their Force: *I will*
 Ps. LXIX. *praise the Name of God with a Song,*
 30, 31. *I will magnify him with Thanksgiving;*
this also shall please the Lord better
than an Ox or Bullock that has Horns
and Hoofs.

'Tis not my Province to answer Objections, that's a Service better plac'd; but I cannot be passive to one that usually assaults this Argument. Some tell us, that we may as fairly conclude for the use of Instrumental Musick in the Worship of God, because the *Jews* often brought it in thither. I shall give a very easy and general Answer, which I hope may both break this Difficulty, and lead us into the true Nature of that Service we are now oblig'd to. 'Tis certain, most of their moral Dutys had a Tincture of Ceremony in 'em, because something further was requir'd of 'em besides an Obedience to the Law: There was *the*
 hope

hope of the Promise made unto the Sermon II.
Fathers ; unto which Promise the
twelve Tribes instantly serving God Acts
Day and Night hop'd to come. That XXIV. 6,
 this Expectation might be kept 7.
 alive, they had the Figures and
 Shadows of the great Blessing uni-
 ted to their Services. I will show
 you this in a parallel Case: Prayer
 to God is undoubtedly establish'd
 upon another foot than that of
 the Types and Ceremonys; and
 yet they are so interwoven, that
 the Duty has a great deal peculiar
 in it, as it comes from them.
 There must be an Offering, their
 Faces are directed to the *House*
which God had chosen to place his
Name there. They had Seasons of
 doing it: *The multitudes stood pray-* Luk. I. 10.
ing without at the time of Incense.
 We read of the *Hours of Prayer:* Acts. III. 1.
 They were to guard against all ce-
 remonial Impuritys; and if any
 thing of this external Part was
 neglected, we sometimes find there's
 a frown of Providence to cloud
 the Work. God made a Breach
 upon David's Design, by striking
 Uzza dead (tho it's probable there

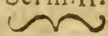
- Serm. II. was a religious Temper among the
 ~~~~~ People) *because they sought him not*  
 1 Chron. *after a due Order.* So that, to bring  
 XV. 13. up the Argument, if a Duty ceases  
 to be moral, because their way of  
 discharging it was peculiar, we  
 shall have the whole Character de-  
 stroy'd : no part of our Obedience  
 can possibly come under that name.  
 The distinction is very plain be-  
 tween this Ordinance we are now  
 defending, and those that are cal-  
 led *carnal ones, impos'd on the Jews*  
 Heb. IX. *till the time of the Reformation.*  
 10. When the Apostle writes to the  
 Church at *Coloss*, he makes it one  
 great part of his Advice to them,  
 Col. II. 16. *that they be not entangled with*  
*Meats and Drinks, or in respect of*  
*Holidays, or New Moons, or Sab-*  
*bath-Days,* which took up a mighty  
 room in the Jewish Worship;  
 but they were only *a shadow of*  
 Ver. 20. *good things to come, for the Body was*  
*Christ,* and they ought to be dead  
*from the Rudiments of the World.*  
 And yet, after he had thus demo-  
 lish'd the whole Mass of Ceremo-  
 ny, in the very next Chapter he  
 Col. III. 16. *directs 'em to Psalms, and Hymns,*  
*and .*

*and spiritual Songs*: which shows *Serm. II.* they are not to be thrown into the number of those Services that are purely Typical.

§. 3. *Human Nature* is fitted to this Work with an especial Design. The Facultys of Enquiry, Meditation, Delight and Wonder, are to relish the Perfection and Bountys of a God, what he is in himself, and what he has done for us; and the Tongue is *our Glory*, that *Ps. XXX.* we may sing *Praise*. We have a <sup>12.</sup>

Capacity to the Service above what other Creatures can pretend to: Our Voices are pliable to Melody; and how can that Beauty in the frame of them be better turn'd than to a decent and regular Performance of this Work? And when any will be at Pains to have this Ordinance carry'd on with a becoming Sweetness, 'tis indeed a devoting the best Instrument of Nature to the best Employment of Grace. *Our Glory* is exerted, and *God's* admir'd. Satan's Artifice against this Duty shows it self two ways: On the one hand, he persuades a loose and careless

Serm. II. World, that there's nothing of  
 ~~~~~ Harmony or Entertainment in it;  
 and therefore if they would be
 pleas'd in the sense of Hearing,
 they must go for it to those things
 that are a long step from Religion.
 On the other hand, he attacks the
 Ordinance with the Prejudice and
 Sourness of those who condemn
 what they don't understand: and
 it's no wonder that a Service so
 useful to the Christian is thus op-
 pos'd. But certainly our having
 Voices, that are capable of doing
 their Work with pleasure this way,
 is both an Argument founded in
 Nature, and obliges to some Dili-
 gence for Qualification. We are
^{a Chron.} expressly told of those that taught
 XXIII. 13 *to sing Praise.* Why is it that God
 has ennobled us at such a Cost of
 Love, but that our Adorations
 may be distinguish'd from the more
 silent ones that other Creatures
 are giving? *The Sun, Moon, and*
^{r Psal.} CXLVIII. *Stars, Dragons, Deeps, Fire, Hail,*
Snow, Wind and Vapours, Moun-
tains, Hills and Trees, Cattel, creep-
ing things and Fowl, praise the Name
of the Lord, and his Glory, which
 is

is above the Heavens. But we are *Serm. II.*
to do it in another manner, as 
we have Souls to digest the Mate-
rials, and peculiar Organs to give
it vent : *With one Mind and one* *Rom. XV.*
Mouth we glorify God, even the Fa-
ther of our Lord Jesus Christ. There's
something in our Make that's e-
quivalent to an Institution ; these
Capacitys of Preparation and Ut-
terance are given us to carry on
the Design : *My Lips shall greatly* *Ps. LXXI.*
rejoice when I sing unto thee, and my
Soul which thou hast redeem'd. 23.

II. This Duty is still more evi-
dent from the positive Institutions
of *God's Word.* I shall consider
this Argument in two Parts, as it
stands upon the *Foundation of the*
Prophets and Apostles. In the Old
Testament we find it commanded,
us'd and endear'd to our imitation
from several Persons, but especi-
ally him who is call'd *the sweet*
Psalmist of Israel. In the New we
have the same Exhortations, to
let us see that it's a continuing
Ordinance ; and our Lord, *when he*
comes, expects to find us so doing.

Serm. II.



§. 1. I begin with that part of the Argument that is grounded on the *Old Testament*; and what Demand returns so often as of our Service to God this way? No Call to any Duty is more repeated, especially in the Book of Psalms. But because there's an Objection always ready against those Exhortations to Singing which we find in the Old Testament, I will only turn you to such Passages as are Prophetick of our Worship under the Gospel. This is universally own'd, that many things in those times were written in a view of this last Dispensation. The Spirit in the Prophets testify'd, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things that are now reported. From several of these Scriptures, it appears with the best Conviction to me, that God design'd to have singing of Psalms a part in his Worship now.

1 Pet. I.
12.

Ver. 5.

The XLVIlth Psalm has a great deal in it that looks at these last days, wherein God has spoken to us by his Son. He is said to go up with a Shout; this was true of our Mediator,

ator, when *the Father rais'd him up* Serm.II.
from the Dead, and gave him Glory. ~~~~~

Again, we there read that *God* 1Pet.I.21.
reigns over the Heathen, and the Ver.8,9.

Princes of the People are gather'd,
even (or as it is in the Margin un-
to) the People of the God of Abra-
ham. And the reason he gives for
it leads us into such a sense of the
words, because the Shields of the
Earth belong unto God, and he is
greatly exalted. What a beautiful
account is this of the Success the
Gospel had, and the Blessing of A- Gal.III. 4.
braham that came on the Gentiles

thro Christ? Now, in this Psalm,
we are commanded to shout unto
God, to sing Praises, to do it with
Understanding: The Call is repea-
ted several times, which lets us
see what our Work shou'd be when
these glorious things took place.
The LXVIIIth Psalm so plainly re-
fers to Christ, that the Apostle Eph.IV.
gives us the very words of it, in
telling us, that he ascended up on
high, &c. And this Exhortation
is mingled in the several parts of
that account, that we sing unto Ver.4.
him that rides on the Heavens; and

particu-

Serm. II. particularly the *Heathen*, who were
 ~~~~~ once *rebellious*, are charg'd to do  
 V. 32, 33. it, because he receiv'd Gifts for  
 them. Sing unto God, ye Kingdoms  
 of the Earth.

The XCVth Psalm is almost repeated in the IIIrd and IVth Chapters to the *Hebrews*: From thence the Apostle fetches his Exhortations, to *hear* God's Voice, and *believe* his Word; which shows that it contains those Rules of Duty that we are to be guided by in the days of the Son of Man; and there we are call'd to come before his Presence with Thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with Psalms.

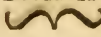
We have a cloud of Witnesses from the Prophets, who foretold the Grace that should come unto us. The Conversion of the *Gentiles* is express'd in this Language, That

Is. XXXV. they shou'd come to Sion with Songs,  
 10. &c. They shall sing for the Majesty  
 Isa. LI. II. of the Lord. Songs shall be heard  
 Isa. XXIV. from the uttermost parts of the Earth,  
 14, 15. even Glory to the Righteous. And in  
 Ch. XLII. another place, The Ends of the  
 Earth, the Inhabitants of the Rock  
 are

are to give Glory to the Lord, and Serm. II. they must declare his Praise in the Islands. The Preaching and Conquest of the Gospel is meant by publishing glad Tydings, and saying Rom. X. unto Sion, Thy God reigneth : And 15. when this is the Happiness of any People, they shall lift up the Voice, Isa. LII. and with the Voice together they sing : 8, 9. They break forth into Joy, and sing together, when the Lord has made bare his holy Arm in the Eyes of all Nations, and all the Ends of the Earth come to see the Salvation of God. Time would fail me to bring in all that we meet with to this purpose; I will only sum up the Argument, That if God design'd to abolish this Ordinance, and rase it out of his Worship, we can scarce think that he would have put the Duty and Joys of a Gospel-day into such Language.

§. 2. I proceed to those Commands that we have in the New Testament ; and these are plain enough to carry their own Evidence. The first I shall mention you have Eph. V. 19. *Speaking, &c. to your selves (or to one another) in Psalms,*  
and

Serm.II. *and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs;*

 *singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.* 'Tis apparent by this Scripture, that a secret Joy in God doth not come up to the Design of the Exhortation. A devout and warm Resentment of his Goodness to us is the Soul of all Duty, but this is not *speaking* in Psalms: The Phrase of the Advice lets us see that it must be different from Meditation, where the Soul is purely retir'd into it self, and shuts out the whole Creation. The *Melody in the Heart* is no Censure of the Voice: It only tells us, that besides the Pleasure of regular Sounds, we must have our Affections rais'd with the Substance and Matter of what is sung:

Ps.CIII. 1. *That our Souls and all that is within us may praise the Lord;* lest we fall under the Misery of those who honour him with their Lips, but remove their Hearts far from him.

Isa.XXIX 13. *who honour him with their Lips, but remove their Hearts far from him.*

Another Scripture, which is much to the same purpose, you have, Col.III. 16. *Let the Word of God dwell in you richly in all Wisdom,*

dom, teaching and admonishing *Serm. II.*  
*(l'un à l'autre) one another in Psalms, and*  
*Hymns, and spiritual Songs; singing*  
*with Grace in your Hearts unto the*  
*Lord.* The Word that was trans-  
 lated *your selves* in the other place,  
 is here produc'd in its true and  
 genuine Sense. The Context to  
 each of these Scriptures is fill'd  
 with Directions for general Ser-  
 vice; the Advice in both of 'em  
 is almost the same, only here we  
 are bid to *let the Word of God dwell*  
*richly in us*; which answers the  
 Design of this Ordinance two  
 ways: *First*, as we are thereby  
 the readier at accommodating the  
 Psalms to our own or others oc-  
 casions; and, *Secondly*, as it en-  
 larges the Mind to understand and  
 apply what we meet with in that  
 great Bank of Experience. *My*  
*Lips shall praise thee, says David, Ps. CXIX.*  
*when thou hast taught me thy Sta-*  
*tutes.* This will help us to find  
 our own case in those Psalms, that  
 look as if they were either *perso-*  
*nal*, or wrapt up in *Judaisms*.  
 When the Word of God *dwells thus*  
*richly in us*, it will form the  
 Thoughts



Serm. II. Thoughts to a greater compass,  
 ~~~~~ and teach us to compare *spiritual*  
 Rom. XV. *things with spiritual*: for *whatsoever*
 3. *was written aforetime is for our Ad-*

monition. We shall be Partners
 with *David* in his Afflictions, and
 tast his Comforts as if they had
 been our own at the first hand.

Isa. LV. 3. And indeed the *Everlasting Cove-*
nant that God makes with us, is
 no other than *the sure Mercys of*
David. This will lead us with-
 in the Vail of Ceremony: By
 knowing the Fitness of the Types
 to their Substance, we shall not
 have our Thoughts shackled with
 the Phrase; but know that those
 Passages which seem to be of the
 narrowest meaning, and most con-
 fin'd to that Age, have a Gospel-
 Sense and Beauty in 'em.

Another Command you find
 Jam. V. 13. *Is any afflicted? let him*
pray: Is any merry? let him sing
Psalms. Perhaps the Word in our
 Translation is a little too light for
 the Frame of Spirit here design'd.
 It expresses a Temper that's very
 becoming those who are *Heirs of*
the Grace of Life, and shou'd re-
 joice

joyce evermore, being not appointed *Serm. II.*
unto Wrath, but to obtain Salvation by Jesus Christ. So that the usual
 Answer to this is frivolous, that
 it's a Duty only for those who
 are joyful: They may as well af-
 firm, that Prayer obliges no fur-
 ther than when Affliction has gone
 before. The latter part of the
 Verse is no more limited than the
 former. Several Psalms are the
 Breathings of David's Spirit un-
 der his Distress. The CII is call'd
A Prayer of the Afflicted, when he
is overwhelm'd, and pours out his
Complaint before the Lord. There
 was in those Believers a Love to
 God and a Hope in him, to gild
 the Darknes of Providence; and
 should not the Christian be ac-
 quainted with these in all his Ad-
 versitys? The Exhortation there-
 fore stands unshaken; *Sing unto the Ps. XXX.*
Lord, ye Saints of his, for his Anger 4, 5.
endures but for a moment; in his Fa-
vour is Life; Weeping may be for a
night, but Joy comes in the morning.
 Who's to blame that we are not
 in a Temper for the Duty? Is
 our Sadness so irregular and vio-
 lent,

Serm.II. *lent, that we refuse to be comforted?* Had we rather allow an Un-

ruliness of Grief, and *charge God foolishly*, than take the Methods of Composure that he has directed us to? Never let that be an Excuse, which in most cases is it self a Crime; but beg rather, that God

Ps. LI. 15. *would put you into Tune: Open thou my Lips, and my Mouth shall shew forth thy Praise.* Perhaps there's a Cloud upon your Comforts at present; but have you no *Hope towards God, or Delight in his Promises?* Look forwards, and

Ps. XCVI. *rejoice before him, because he will come to judge the Earth with Righteousness, and his People with Truth.* Afflictions don't deserve to hinder

Phil. IV. 6. *you: Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by Prayer, and Supplication, and (this Method of) Thanksgiving, make your Requests known unto God.*

III. We are directed by *Example* to this Duty. These things are recorded for our *Admonition*, upon whom the *Ends of the Earth* are come. The *Historys of God's People*

People are not a dry Entertain-Serm.II.
ment; they don't tell us matters remote and foreign: but they are either a Test to show us what we are, or a Rule to tell us what we should be. I'll begin with the *original Pattern*: We find our blessed Lord imploy'd in singing the Praises of the Father. 'Tis true, a great part of his Duty is recorded for our Hope and Wonder, and engages to no Imitation; such as his working Miracles, suffering the Wrath of God, satisfying the Law, by which he brought in an *Everlasting Righteousness*. These are not our Rule, but the Refuge we must flee to, the Hope that is set before us. *He trod the Wine-press* Isa.LXIII.
alone, and of the People there was 3.
none with him. But as to the Purity and Devotion of his Life, we should be *Followers of him as dear* Eph.IV.1.
Children. Now when he was to part with his Disciples, and took leave in an Ordinance that should continue till they met again, he sung an Hymn with 'em. This could not be merely in compliance with the Jewish Custom at the Passover;

Serm. II. fover; for that Solemnity expir'd
 then, and he had appointed another *in remembrance* of himself and his second *Coming*. His Soul was full of holy Reverence and Love to the Father. He knew the Work of Redemption was now almost finish'd; and as this would engage the Songs of Heaven, so he employs his Voice in the Service of his Heart: He glorifies God both in Spirit and Body, as was
 Ps. LXV. 2. becoming one who had *Grace pour'd into his Lips*. Those words of *David* were eminently design'd for
 Ps. XL. 3. him; *The Lord has put a new Song into my mouth, even Praise to our God*. This, I say, was his Language, who said afterwards, *Lo, I come; in the Volume of thy Book it is written of me*. This is the *Example* that he has left for us *to follow his steps*.

David's Practice in this Duty makes a whole Book. I know how quick some People are with their Objection, That our Case is not his; but I don't see how that's any bar to the concurrence of Faith and Hope with his Meditations. Nothing could be more per-

personal than *the changing his Behaviour before Abimelech*; and yet upon that occasion he desires others to *magnify the Lord with him*, and that they might *exalt his Name together*. And we find his Psalms us'd by People who were remov'd the length of several Ages from him. *Hezekiah*, and such as join'd in the Passover with him, *prais'd the Lord with the Words of David*, and *Asaph the Seer*: and they sung Praises with gladness, and bow'd their Heads and worship'd. We find the same upon another eminent Turn of Providence; They prais'd God after the Ordinance of David King of Israel. The Apostles and holy Men of God in later times were thus employ'd. Paul and Silas sung Praises to God in the Stocks: The Multitude of the Disciples, and others, did it, when Christ made his publick Entry into Jerusalem. And when the Apostle is giving Directions about the Conduct of our publick Worship, he speaks of himself, *I will sing with the Spirit, and with Understanding* also. Nay, methinks, we may look

Serm. II.

Psalms
XXXIV. 3

2 Chron.
XXIX. 30.

Ezr. III. 10

1 Cor. XIV
15.

Serm. II. look much higher for Examples:

~ This was the Work of the Angels;
 Job XXXVIII. 7. *When the Foundations of the Earth were laid, the Morning-Stars sung together, and all the Sons of God shouted for Joy.*

IV. There's something in our Frame and Composition as *Christians*, that may endear this Ordinance to us. *Fornication, Unclean-ness, Covetousness, Filthiness, and foolish Talking* are not to be nam'd among us, as becometh Saints; but rather giving of thanks.

§. 1. 'Tis a means of further Instruction. *Moses* writ a Song, which must not depart from the mouths of the Children of Israel, lest they should forget the wonderful Works of God. We speak to our selves, and admonish one another in *Psalms and Hymns*. This gives the Mind an advantage to dwell upon the things of God with a pleasing Meditation; and, in this sense, *Prov. XVI. 21. the Sweetness of the Lips increaseth Learning.*

§. 2. 'Tis a proper Effect of the Believer's Joy. *Because thy Loving-kindness*
 Ps. LXIII. 3, 4.

kindness is better than Life, my Lips Sermon II.
shall praise thee. My Soul shall be ~~~~~
satisfy'd with Marrow and Fatness ;
and my Mouth shall praise thee with
joyful Lips. 'Tis the early Voice
of the Convert, The Kings of the Psalm
Earth shall praise thee, when they CXXXviii
hear the words of my mouth ; yea, 4, 5.
they shall sing in the ways of the
Lord. Men will show their plea-
sure abroad. Such as are govern'd
by a sensual Taste of things, feel
a Delight that cannot be pent up.
They declare themselves in Roar-
ing and Folly, and an Excess of
Riot. Now 'tis this Ordinance
that fixes the distinction between
profane and sacred Mirth: Be not Eph.V.18,
drunk with Wine, but be ye fill'd with 19.
the Spirit, speaking to your selves in
Psalms. I need but remind you
of the Example we have newly
parted with. When Paul and Si-
lus were in the Stocks, confin'd
with Scandal and Danger, they
sung so loud, that the Prisoners
heard them. This was the Fruit
of that Redemption they felt in
themselves, and preach'd to others ;
and it made good that Promise,
 D That

Serm. II. That *the Wilderneck should be as Eden, and the Desert as the Garden*
 Isa. LI. 3. *of the Lord; Joy and Gladness being found therein, Thanksgiving and the Voice of Melody.* This becomes the Triumph we have in God more than Boasting and Wrangling: It's a Duty to the praise of his Grace, who has made us accepted in the Beloved. Thus we should begin to enjoy a Mercy. When God was about to open a Spring in the Wilderneck, Israel sung a Song. Providence has testify'd to the Value of a Joy that shows it self this way. When Jehosaphat had appointed Singers to the Lord, who went out before the Army, and they begun to sing and praise; God set Ambushments against the Children of Moab and Ammon, and they were smitten down before Judah.

Numb.
XXI. 17.

2 Chron.
XX. 22.

§. 3. 'Tis a good means of declaring our Religion to the World. These two are made the same thing, Praising God and Teaching others; *I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy Name.* Nay, Christ himself is brought in as making known his

Rom. XV.
9.

the Duty of SINGING.

51

Doctrine by this method: *Saying*, Sermon II.
I will declare thy Name unto my Bre-
thren; in the midst of the Congrega- Heb. II. 12.
tion I will sing praise unto thee.

And well then may it be said of
his People; *It is good to sing Prai-* Psalm
ses unto our God, for it is pleasant, CXLVII. 1
and Praise is comely. Thus we ren-
der unto him the Calves of our Lips. Hos. XIV. 2

It may be, there's no one Ordinance in either Publick or Family Worship so fitted to this Design.

I could show you from the Learned Bishop of Salisbury's History, how the *Reformation in England* prosper'd by the mighty Zeal of People in this Work; and God own'd it with the same Blessing in *France*: but these things will have a more natural place among the Exhortations to this Duty. I'll therefore leave this Subject to the last part of this Design; and thither I refer you.

§. 4. It promotes and sweetens other Ordinances. 'Tis good to begin with it; *to serve the Lord* Ps. C. 2.
with Gladness, and come before his
presence with Singing. The Services of God's House are so far from

D 2

clashing,

Serm. II. clashing, that they are a mutual

Advantage to one another. Thus we find *Neh. IX.* *One fourth part of the Day they read in the Law of God, and another fourth was taken up in worshipping; and when they had cry'd unto him, the Levites call'd upon 'em, to praise his glorious Name, which is exalted above all Blessing and Praise.* 'Twas thus that our Lord concluded his Feast of Love with the Disciples; *After Supper they sung an Hymn.* This Variety in publick Worship makes it more easy and beautiful. The Apostle blames the *Corinthians* for the Confusion of their Assemblies, That every one of 'em had a *Psalm, a Doctrine, &c.* but he allows the Parts themselves. It seems the most natural Close of our Devotions. When we have been receiving the *Good Tidings of Salvation*, and have heard it said unto Sion, *Thy God reigneth;* 'tis the very Letter of the Prophecy, that with the Voice together we should sing. The Lord doth therefore take pleasure in his People, and beautify the Meek with Salvation: That the Saints may be joyful

I Cor.
XIV. 26.

PLCXLIX
4, 5, 6.

joyful in Glory, and sing aloud upon Serm.II.
their Beds; that the high Praises of ~~~~~
God may be in their mouths.

§. 5. *The Heavenly State* which every upright Soul is breathing to, comes under this Description. When they that are in their Graves hear the Voice of the Son of Man and live, they'll rise in Tune. Thy dead Men shall live, together with Isa.XXVI. my dead Body shall they arise. Awake ^{19.} and sing, ye that dwell in the Dust. 'Tis the only Ordinance of this World, that we meet with in a better; Prophecys shall fail, Tongues I Cor. will cease, and the common means XIII. 8. of Knowledg vanish away. But it's the Blessedness of those that dwell Rev.XIV.3 in the Building of God, the House not made with hands, that they shall ever praise him. The 144000 sing a new Song before the Throne. Now surely we should not have had the Joys and Worship of a dear Eternity put into these Names, if there were not something in the present Sweets of Duty to guide our Conception of it. This is the Employment of Saints and Angels, a Meditation upon those Wonders

Serm. II. that are recorded in Heaven, with
 everlasting Shouts of Praise to
*him that sits upon the Throne, and to
 the Lamb.* 'Tis in these terms
 that God's own Delight is ex-
 Zeph. III. press'd; *He will rest in his Love,*
 17. *and rejoice over them with singing.*

'Tis a good way to allure our
 Value for that better Church, when
 the most delightful part of Wor-
 ship here is to give it a Title. The
 Faith and Hope, that are con-
 tending upwards, do never so
 well employ themselves, as in the
 Duty of admiring God; because
 it's so much the same with the Vi-
 sion into which they shall expire.

I'll conclude the whole with the
 Apostle's Advice, grounded on
 Heb. XIII. this very Argument, *We have here*
 14, 15. *no continuing City, but we seek one
 to come;* 'tis the desire of our Souls
 that it may be, and we have the
 Word of a Redeemer that it shall
 be: *By him therefore let us offer the
 Sacrifice of Praise unto God conti-
 nually, that is, the Fruit of our Lips,
 giving thanks unto his Name.*

The EXCELLENCE
of the *Duty* of
SINGING.

SERMON III.

PSAL. CXLVII. I.

*Praise ye the Lord, for it is good
to sing Praise to our God; for
it is pleasant, and Praise is
comely.*

TIS the third Part of the
Subject that has fallen to
my share, and which I
am to consider at this time; *i. e.*
To represent the *Excellence* of this
noble Duty, and recommend it to
your Love and Esteem. I shall

Ser. III. confine my self strictly to this single Branch of the Subject, and endeavour to keep within the limits prescrib'd me.

EXCELLENCE, or the just Commendation that belongs to a thing, may be consider'd either as something *real* and inherent in the Subject; or as something *relative*, and in the respect it bears to other things. The former signifies the *intrinsic* Value of a thing, or what it has in it self to recommend it: The latter signifies its *Preference* to other things, or what there is in it that exceeds others of a like kind.

I shall proceed upon these general Measures in the present Case, and represent the Excellence or Value of this Duty, under this double Consideration of it.

- I. Consider it more *Absolutely*, and as it is in it self.
- II. More *Relatively*, and as it stands in comparison with others.

Under

Under the former I shall shew Ser. III. wherein it agrees, and what it has more in *common* with others : Under the latter, wherein it excels, and what it has more appropriate and *peculiar* to it self.

I. I shall consider it more *absolutely*. And the Excellence of it will appear, if you view the whole Frame of it, and consider it in all its Parts; *viz.*

§. 1. Consider the *Matter* that is to be sung ; in the general, The *Praises* of God : That I may shew Ps. IX. 14. *forth all thy Praise*. And the Apostle expresses it by *Psalms*, and *Hymns*, and *spiritual Songs*; which perhaps may be design'd to signify nothing more than the several Titles and Divisions of the Book of Psalms.

But then this must be understood in the fullest Latitude : Whatsoever tends to the Praise of the Almighty, every Representation of his Glory, and every Discovery of his Will. And if you consult the Sacred Psalmody, you shall find that the Psalms that are

Ser. III. upon record, are full of various
 ~~~~~ Excellencys, and one of the most  
 lofty and noble Parts of the Sacred  
 Writings. Particularly,

We are to sing the Praises of  
*Creating Power*. To this purpose  
 divers of the Psalms of *David* are  
 particularly directed; that recount  
 the Glorys of the great Creator,  
 and celebrate his Praise, in the  
 stately Fabrick of Heaven and  
 Earth, in the rich Furniture and  
 vast Variety of Beings, in all the  
 Impresses of his Glory upon the  
 Creation, and all the Instances of  
 his eternal Power and Godhead.

PS. XIX. *The Heavens declare the Glory of*  
 1, 2. *God, and the Firmament sheweth his*  
*Handy-work, &c. Thou art great,*  
*clothed with Majesty and Honour;*  
*coverest thy self with Light as with a*

PS. CIV. *Garment; stretchest out the Heavens*  
 beginning. *as a Curtain: He layeth the Beams of*  
*his Chamber in the Water, maketh the*  
*Clouds his Chariot, and walketh upon*  
*the Wings of the Wind. Thou laid'st*  
*the Foundation of the Earth, that it*  
*should not be remov'd for ever, and*  
*cover'dst it with the Deep as with a*  
*Garment, &c.*

And

And so in the Frame of our Ser. III. own *Nature*; the curious and wonderful Workmanship of Body and Soul, that carry a lively Resemblance, and bear a strong Impression of the Divine Being and Perfection, in every Member and Faculty of each. *Thou hast possess'd my Reins: Thou hast cover'd me in my Mother's Womb. I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: Marvellous are thy Works, and that my Soul knoweth right well. My Substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest Parts of the Earth. Thine Eye did see my Substance yet being imperfect, and in thy Book all my Members were written; which in time were fashion'd, when as yet there was none of them.*

Again, We sing the Praises of Redeeming Love. To this several of the noblest Psalms of *David* expressly refer, that foretel the Coming of the *Messiah*, and describe the Glorys of his Person, and the Fruits of his Death. The Psalmist sings of the Excellence and Glory of the *King*; and particularly describes,



Ser. III. scribes, in lofty Numbers, the Kingdom and Priesthood, the Sufferings and Triumphs of the Redeemer. So the great *Hallel* sung by the Jews at the Solemnity of the Passover, and is probably thought by Learned Men to be the Hymn sung by our Lord at the Institution of the Supper. I might mention the *Penitential* Psalms that describe his Mercy to humble Penitents, and abound in Expressions of the tenderest Kindness, as well as the lowest Abasement.

The Song of *Solomon* is a divine and rapturous, as well as a lofty and artful Piece of Poetry; describing at once the Beauty and Excellence of the Redeemer's Person, and the Tenderness of his Affection and Care; the Intercourses of divine Love in all the various Workings of Kindness and Respect between Christ and his Church.

And if you look into the New Testament, we have the Song of *Mary* upon the Message of the Angels, and the Salutation of *Elizabeth*: Where she celebrates the condescending Favour of the Almighty



mighty to her low and humble Ser. III.  
State, when he abased the Mighty  
and the Proud; and his Faithful-  
ness and Mercy to his People Is-  
rael. There is the Song of Za- Luke I:67.  
*charias*; where he recounts at  
large his Faithfulness to his Pro-  
mise in sending the *Messiah*, and  
the mighty Benefits to the World  
by his Appearance: And the rap-  
turous Song of old *Simeon* at the Luke II:24  
sight of the Infant-Redeemer.

Again, We sing the Praises of  
*Providential Care*: His regular  
Government and particular Notice  
of all his Creatures. He daily  
supports the Being, and supplies  
the Wants of innumerable Crea-  
tures, and exercises a wise and  
equal Care of every one. He di-  
rects the Course of publick Af-  
fairs by a sure and unerring Hand,  
and over-rules the Disorders of  
them by seasonable Interposures  
and powerful Influence. Many of  
the Psalms of *David* are dedicated  
to the Praise of his Providence.  
He describes his Omnipresence and  
particular Observance of every  
thing: *Whither shall I flee from*

[Psalm  
CXXXIX

Ser. III. *thy Presence? Whither shall I go  
 from thy Spirit? If I ascend up into  
 Heaven; if I make my bed in Hell;  
 if I take the Wings of the Morning,  
 and dwell in the uttermost parts of  
 the Earth; behold thou art there, &c.*

He describes his general Goodness  
 and his tender Mercy over all his  
 Works: *The Earth is full of the  
 Goodness of the Lord. The Eyes of  
 15, 16. all look unto thee, and thou givest  
 them their Food in due season. He  
 openeth his hand, and satisfieth the  
 Desires of all the Living. He ce-  
 lebrates his own Deliverance out of  
 Ps. XVIII. the hands of all his Enemys, and out  
 of the hands of Saul.*

Particularly, The extraordinary  
 Appearances of God in the World,  
 both of Judgment and Mercy; in  
 the unusual Displays of himself, as  
 well as in the more stated and or-  
 dinary Course of things. This has  
 been always Matter of Praise to  
 the People of God, and the Sub-  
 ject of some of their noblest Songs.  
 Such was the Song of *Moses*;  
 Exod. XV. where he magnifies the *Arm of the  
 Lord* in so miraculous Appearance,  
 that at once carry'd with it sudden  
 Deli-

Deliverance to his People, surprizing Ruin to their Enemys, and Terroure and Amazement to all the World. Such was his dying Song ; where he gives a lively and affecting Description of the distinguishing Favour and rich Bounty of God to *Israel*, and all the Terroures of Vengeance and Wrath that would come upon them, for their Rebellion and Abuse. And so the Song of *Deborah* and *Barak*, who judg'd *Israel* when God subdu'd the *Canaanites* before them, is full of beautiful Figures and noble Flights ; and is remarkable as well for its artful Contrivance, as its admirable Sense.

I shall close this Head with this one Reflection : That as the Sacred Poesy is one of the noblest Parts of all the Divine Writings, so it vastly exceeds, in the Sublimeness of Subject and Majesty of Expression, the finest Compositions of human Wit, and the most labour'd Productions of Art. And 'tis greatly to be lamented, that that noble Art, which sprung from God, and was devoted to his Praise,


Ser. III.  
Deut. XXXII.  
1—46.  
Judg. V.

Ser. III. Praise, is so sadly degenerated from its original Design and proper Use. The celebrated *Poets* of the present Age have debas'd the Majesty of Verse, and prostituted the Muses to the Service of their Lusts ; and so the loftiest Numbers and the sweetest Verse have been employ'd in describing the fanciful Atchievements and the fulsom Praise of some little *Hero* or leud *Amour*. The impure Mixtures of the finest Poems offend and shock a pious or a vertuous Mind, and render them full of Snare and Danger to others: like luscious *Poison*, that pleases and corrupts, easily insinuates and enters deep ; and the higher a relish it gives, the more surely destroys.

§. 2. Let us consider the *Subject* that is to be employ'd in singing the Praises of God. 'Tis the Exercise of the whole Man. It employs the Facultys and Members of Soul and Body. It engages the full Strength of Nature. For instance,


There must be a Union and Harmony of all the *Powers* of the Soul.

They

They must all concur, and be set right to sing the Praises of God.  Ser. III.

*I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole Heart.* Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name. The Heart is the Seat of Life and the Spring of Motion, that diffuses Life into every Part, and feeds the vital Pulse in every Vein. The Heart is the Life and Soul of every Duty, and we are expressly requir'd to make Melody in our Heart. The Understanding is the noble and distinguishing Power of the Soul; and we must sing Praises with Understanding: I will sing with the Spirit, and with Understanding. Which, tho it should be meant of the Understanding of others, i. e. that they may understand what is sung (as may be gather'd from v. 19.) yet does however clearly suppose, and more strongly infer his own. We must distinctly apprehend, and rightly conceive the Sense and Meaning of what we sing. It requires the proper Exercise of all the Affections, the suitable working of the natural Passions answerable to



Ser. III. to the various Matter and the  
 different Subject of our Song.

Yea, Singing requires the Exercise of all the *Graces*, and the most heavenly and exalted Frame of Mind. 'Tis no low and common Temper of 'Soul, that is suitable to the high Praises of God.

Col. III. 16 We must sing *with Grace in our Hearts*. For instance, with an humble *Reverence* and holy Awe, under the sense of his infinite Distance and glorious Excellence, *Exod. XV. who is fearful in Praises, working Wonders*. With *Divine Love*: An affectionate Sense of his Loveliness and Perfection; a Heart enflam'd with Love to God, as the most amiable Being and Fountain of all Perfection, and strongly aspiring and tending towards him. With heavenly *Joy*: An Exultation of Heart; the Risings and Overflowings of the Soul, from the Fulness of inward Sense, and Strength of inward Resentment. We must be

Pf. IX. 2. *glad and rejoice; and make a joyful*  
 :-XCIV. 4. *noise, rejoice and sing Praise*. With real *Gratitude*: A kindly Resentment of divine Favours; a Heart  
 deeply



deeply affected with his various Ser. III. Goodness, and freely dispos'd to proper Acknowledgments and Returns, &c.

And then the *Members* of the Body must be employ'd too; and it engages all the noble and excellent Parts. The *Tongue* that is our *Glory* is the great Instrument of Praise, and constantly employ'd in singing to the Lord: *My Glory* Ps. XXX. *shall sing Praise to thee, and not be* <sup>12.</sup> *silent.* The *Lips*; *Because thy Loving-kindness is better than Life, my Lips shall praise thee.* The *Mouth*; *My Mouth shall praise* — 5: *thee with joyful Lips.* Then was our *Mouth* fill'd with *Laughter* and *Psalms* our *Tongue* with *Songs.* Our *Breath* CXXVI. 2: and *Voice* must be employ'd; we must *sing with the Voice of a Psalm*, XCVIII. 5. and with the *Voice of Joy and* — XLII. 4. *Praise.* And, *Let every thing that* — CL. ult. *hath Breath praise the Lord.*

Not to mention, that under the Law they prais'd God with *Dancing* and *clapping* their hands; *shouting* for Joy, and playing upon the *Viol* and *Harp*, and all the Instruments of Musick.

Ser. III. §. 3. Consider the *Exercise* it self. 'Tis a noble Exercise futable to the glorious Object it's employ'd about, and the excellent Subject it employs. There are several Propertys of singular Excellence. For instance;

'Tis a great *Solemnity* of Gospel-Worship. That it was practis'd under the Law, appears by the whole Book of Psalms; and is not, I suppose, call'd in question by any: That 'tis renew'd and continu'd under the Gospel, has been already prov'd. I am only to argue from thence.

'Tis not, I think, a merely natural Duty, much less an arbitrary one, that can be justly reckon'd among the Inventions of Men, or to draw its Original from the Wisdom of this World. 'Tis an Institution of Gospel-Worship, that bears the Impress of divine


Col. III. 16 *Authority*, is consecrated by the  
 Mat. XXVI *Example* of the Redeemer, and to  
 30. be perform'd by the help of the  
 Eph. V. 18. *Divine Spirit*: *Be fill'd with the Spirit, speaking to your selves in*  
 1 Cor. XIV *Psalms, &c.* And, *I will sing with*  
 15. *the*

*the Spirit and with Understanding: Ser. III.  
i. e. by the Assistance of the Spirit of God, as well as with the  
Exercise of my own.*

It has been the constant Practice of the Church of God in every Age, and is a standing Part of our solemn Worship. And indeed it gives a *Solemnity* to Divine Worship, and adds a certain *State* to every other part. It carries a Sweetness and a Majesty in it, gives an Air and Delight to it, and is one of the principal *Glories* of the Gospel Worship.

Besides, 'tis a *spiritual* Service. Spirituality is the distinguishing Character of every Part of Gospel Worship; as we are to have a more direct eye to God who is a Spirit, and more especially to regard the Workings and Exercise of our own Spirit: *To worship him* Joh. IV. 24 *in Spirit and in Truth.*

Now tho the Ceremony and State of the legal Worship, and especially of the Temple-Service, requir'd many musical Instruments and great external Pomp; yet singing the Praises of God is very  
futable

Ser. III. suitable to the Purity of Gospel-  
 Worship, and a very great Exercise of Spirituality. 'Tis a spiritual Object we are wholly to attend; The Glory and Perfection of the Divine Being. We eye him and terminate on him in the most direct and immediate manner. And 'tis the proper Exercise of our own Spirit: *I will sing with the Spirit and with Understanding.* And tho there is a Concurrence of Soul and Body, and the one is employ'd as well as the other; yet the Soul is the proper Agent, the Body only the Instrument of the Soul, or the *Organ* thro which it sings the Praises of God.

Indeed it requires the best Exercise of the Soul, as 'tis proper to pure unbody'd Spirits: That we be *fill'd with the Spirit, speaking to our selves in Psalms, &c.* The Mind should be wholly abstracted from all sensible Objects, and deeply intent in the Contemplation of the Divine Glory; and 'tis never more spiritual, than in the right Performance of this heavenly Work.

Further;

Further; 'Tis a *comely* Exercise. Ser. III.

*'Tis good to sing Praise to our God,*  
*and Praise is comely.* Comeliness <sup>Psalm</sup> CXLVII.1

or Decency is the Sutableness of things one to another, and a certain Agreeableness between them; when there is a due Proportion, or at least a proper Sutableness between Persons or Things, as it may be respectively apply'd: as in a comely Face or regular Building.

Now there is a mighty Decency in this Case, and it well becomes us to sing the Praises of God. Nothing we can do is more worthy of God, or better agrees to our selves. Nothing is more sutable to the Distance and Relation between God and his Creatures. When the heavenly King is surrounded with loud Acclamations of joyful Subjects, his Excellence and Perfection proclaim'd and exalted by the highest Praise; his wonderful Works are magnify'd and admir'd in triumphant Acknowledgments, and his Bounty and Love celebrated and ador'd with Hallelujahs of Joy: When every Mouth is fill'd with his Praise, and every Place

re-

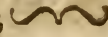


Ser. III. resounds and ecchoes back his  
 ~~~~~ Name; nothing is more agreeable  
 in it self, or has a more delightful
 lovely Appearance to the World.

Finally, 'Tis highly *acceptable*
 and pleasing to God. 'Tis an Ho-
 nour to the Almighty (such as a
 Creature is capable of) to sing his
 Praise : And God is pleas'd with
 the Service, both as his own Ap-
 pointment, and the highest Ex-
 pression of our Esteem. He is
 the proper Object and the glorious
 Theme, and has sometimes given
 signal Marks of his Approbation.

Eph.V.19. 'Tis *making Melody in our Hearts to*
the Lord. 'Tis Melody to the

Ps.XXII.3 Praises of his Saints, as he *inhabits*
 the Praises of *Israel*. The Voice
 of their sincere Praise is a plea-
 sant Sound: The Breath of their
 Praise, like the *Smoke* of the Sa-
 crifice, or the *Cloud* of Incense,
 ascends to God in a sweet Per-
 fume. 'Tis an *Odour of a sweet*
smell, and with such Sacrifices God is
 well pleas'd.

§. 4. Consider the *Ends* and *Uses* Ser. III.
of it. 'Tis not a mere Solemnity; 
a Piece of empty State; only to
give Life and Airs to the more
grave and solemn Parts of Wor-
ship, or a more sensible Relish of
Pleasure to the Service of God.
'Tis a profitable Exercise, and is
of admirable Benefit and Use.
For instance,

'Tis very *Instructing*. There is
a rich Variety of excellent Mat-
ter in the Sacred Psalms, suitable
to all the Conditions of Life, and
all the Workings of an holy Soul :
Many rare Discoverys of divine
Truth, and many rich Experiences.
The Title of divers Psalms is *Mas-*
chil, i.e. A Psalm giving Instruction.

Now singing Praises is very
profitable for the improving of
our Understanding and Knowledg
of the Truth. Many a Beam of
Divine Light darts into the Mind,
and shines clear and strong. The
Experiences of other holy Souls
instruct us in the Knowledg of
our own. And so of all the ways
of Improvement by the Divine
Word, as Reading, Hearing, &c.

E

this

Ser. III. this is none of the least considerable, both as to the clearer Knowledg of the Divine Will, and the better Acquaintance with our

Eph. V. 19. selves. *Speaking to your selves in Psalms, &c.* communing with one another about them; And, *Teach-*

Col. III. 16 *ing and admonishing one another in Psalms and Hymns*: Where *Teaching* may refer to Matters of Faith and Doctrine, and *Admonishing* to Rules of Life and Duty. And so we may considerably grow in the Knowledg of the Truth, and abound with practical Directions for the Government of Life. And whatsoever is the Subject of the Psalm we sing, may be profitably improv'd by wise Accommodation to our selves, or at least by proper Meditations upon it.

Again, 'Tis an *Affecting* Exercise, peculiarly fitted with special Advantage to raise holy Affections of Soul, and enliven every Grace. The Thoughts have more leisure to work, and are more intensely fix'd, while the Sound is dilated and drawn out to so great a length; and the Mind employ'd with so much

much Solemnity. And the same Ser. III. thing will more powerfully move, and more sensibly affect, when 'tis devoutly sung, than when 'tis ever so carefully read. Thus Singing will affect the Soul with an inward Grief and the deepest Sorrow in Penitential Psalms, and with the warmest Love and Joy in Psalms of Praise. It will raise and dilate the Mind, and give the best advantage to the strongest Workings of Affection. Thus the Hearts of holy Men have been sometimes quicken'd and drawn forth in Raptures of Love and Extasys of Delight. They have been, as it were, fluttering upon the Wing, and ready to rise, and mount, and fly away. St. *Austin* relates of himself at his first Conversion ; *O how much have I wept, Confess. how exceedingly moved and affected, lib. 9. c. 6. at the Hymns and Songs and harmonious Voices of the Church ! Those Voices pierc'd my Ears ; thy Truth enter'd my Soul, devout Affections were rais'd, Tears flow'd, &c.* To this purpose the Testimony and Experience of the famous *Beza* is very

Ser. III. remarkable, That when he came
 ~~~~~ into the Assembly, while they  
 Beza in were singing the Praises of God,  
 Psal. XCI. he found himself suddenly inspir'd  
 with a divine Warmth, and  
 strangely affected with Love and  
 Joy; so that the Assembly seem'd  
 to him as the Gate of Heaven, or  
 an Entrance into Glory.

Again; 'tis an *Entertaining* and  
 pleasant Work: 'Tis good to sing.  
 Psal. CXLVII.1 *Praise, for it is pleasant.* 'Tis a  
 religious Entertainment, a divine  
 Repast to an holy Soul, by which  
 it gives vent to its inward Resent-  
 ments, and takes in an agreeable  
 Pleasure. 'Tis a sweet Solace and  
 Delight in Circumstances of Pros-  
 perity and Ease, to sing the Prai-  
 ses of God; and 'tis most peculi-  
 arly suitable and proper at such a  
 time: *If any be merry, let him sing*  
 Jam. V. 13. *Psalms. In the time of Prosperity*  
 Eccl. VII. 14. *rejoice.*

This will take off the Mind  
 from low Delights and carnal  
 Mirth, that are apt to divert and  
 defile; and take it up in the most  
 proper Exercise, and be at the  
 same time a noble Employment  
 and



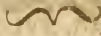
and Entertainment too. 'Twill Ser. III.  
enliven our Spirits, and refine our  
Joys; 'twill yield a Refreshment  
to the Mind, tir'd with other holy  
Exercifes, and amidst all the other  
Delights of Life be constant Me-  
lody and Musick to the Soul: *They* Act. II. 47.  
*continu'd daily with one accord in*  
*the Temple, and breaking Bread from*  
*House to House, did eat their Meat*  
*with Gladness and Singleness of Heart,*  
*praising the Lord.* And 'tis said of  
the Disciples, at the Ascension of  
our Lord, *They worship'd him, and* Luke  
*return'd to Jerusalem with great Joy,* XXIV. 53.  
*and were continually in the Temple*  
 *blessing and praising God.*

Lastly, 'Tis very comforting and  
supporting: 'Tis the great Re-  
freshment of an afflicted State, as  
well as the Entertainment of a  
more prosperous one: 'Tis a  
mighty Relief to a Spirit oppress'd  
with Cares and Grievs; it exhilar-  
ates and revives a drooping and  
languishing Soul, and raises and  
enlarges the Heart when 'tis sunk  
down and contracted within it  
self, and has sometimes yielded  
Consolation and Support under

Ser. III. the closest Confinement and the severest Sufferings. Thus *Paul* and *Silas* in a close Prison, fastned in the Stocks, in the Darknes of the Night, reliev'd their Spirits, and delighted their Souls by singing the Praises of God. And the holy Psalmist tells us his Experience,

Ps. CXIX. Thy Statutes have been my Songs in the House of my Pilgrimage. They have furnish'd me with matter of Praise in my Wilderiness State, and in my Wandrings thro this World, and have refresh'd my Soul in all the wearisom Stages and Fatigues of Life.

To this purpose the primitive Christians, under the third Persecution by *Trajan*, met together very early on a stated day, to sing an Hymn to *Christ* their God, as is related by *Pliny*, an Heathen Writer, in his Account to the Emperor. And that Passage of the renown'd and heroick *Luther* is worthy Observation, who was wont to tell *Melandthon* (a very wise and learned, but a more timorous and fearful Man) under the great Discouragements and dark Prospects of

of things at the beginning of the Ser. III.  
Reformation: *Come, says he, let*   
*us sing the 46th Psalm, and let Earth*  
*and Hell do its worst.*

I shall only further observe, with relation to each of these Advantages of Singing, that they extend to *others* as well as to our *selves*. We are to *speak to our selves*, or to one another, in *Psalms*; and to *teach and admonish one another*, *eauiſes*, the same word as before. 'Tis mutually beneficial, and of extensive Use. All concur together in this holy Exercise, and each one excites and assists the other. Every other Person, that sings the Praises of God, helps to excite the Affection, and raise the Devotion of my Soul; and my Singing helps to raise and excite another's. The Breath of Praise mutually fans one another's Souls, kindles a divine Heat, and blows it up into a Flame; and so every one contributes something to another's Good, and receives some help from every other.

Ser. III.



II. I shall consider it more *relatively*, and in *comparison* with other Dutys. This will not be any odious Comparison or invidious Preference, like those among Men, to sink the Character and darken the Reputation of one, to raise and brighten another. 'Tis usual, in the Scriptures, to make Comparisons of Graces and Dutys as well as Sins, and to give the Preference of one to another; and 'tis a proper measure, by which to take the value of things, to compare them with others of the same kind, and shew wherein they excel. Thus our Lord speaks of the

Mat. XXII *First and Great Command*, that  
38. which is chief and principal in Value as well as in Order; and so

Mat. V. 19. we read of the *Least Command*. And the Apostle makes a comparison among the principal Graces, and gives the just Preference of

1 Cor. one to the rest: *Now remaineth*  
XIII. 13. *Faith, Hope, Charity, these three, but the greatest of these is Charity; i. e.* it excels the other two. And

1 Cor. XII. he speaks of *coveting the best Gifts*,  
31. and

*and of shewing a more excellent way.* Ser. III.

There is a real Difference in the Degrees of their Excellence, as there is in their Natures and Kinds.

But then this must be understood to be in some *certain* Respects only, not in *every* Respect: for every Grace and Duty has its proper Excellence as well as its proper Place, and so every one exceeds another in some certain Respects and to some special Purposes; so that this is design'd only to give the true value, and assign the proper place of one, not to prejudice or disparage any.

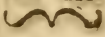
To bring this down to the present Case: There are other Dutys of Religion that, for instance, are more absolutely necessary in our present State, and all things consider'd, than singing the Praises of God; such as Repentance towards God, and Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ: These are indispensably necessary by the Gospel-Covenant, and such as we can't be sav'd without; and in this Respect they exceed all others. But then this Duty is preferable in *some* Respects,



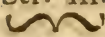
Ser. III. fpects, and has Characters of Excellence peculiar to it self. As now, for instance, to represent this matter a little distinctly.

§. 1. In the respect it bears to its *Object*, it has a direct respect to God, and so has every other part of Worship; but it respects him under a higher Consideration, and in nobler Instances. He is to be consider'd as the proper Object of Praise; *i. e.* with respect to the most glorious Perfections of his Nature, and the most excellent Displays of himself: other Dutys and Graces respect him in lower Instances, and in a more confin'd Sense. So Prayer respects his All-sufficiency, that he can supply all my Wants; Repentance, his Mercy, that he is inclin'd to forgive; Faith, his Power and Word, that he is able and dispos'd to deliver and save, &c.

But Praise respects God, as he is in himself, in all the shining Perfections of his Nature, and in all his wonderful Works; in every Appearance of Love and Power, of Mercy and Judgment to the World.

World. We consider him as the Ser. III.  
most glorious and lovely Being,   
the most adorable Object, and  
worthy the highest Veneration. In  
a word, 'tis God in his highest Glo-  
ry, and under the best Considera-  
tions of him, that is the pro-  
per Object of Praise.

Thus you shall find he is always  
spoken of in the present Case: *We* Ps. LXVI.  
*sing forth the Honour of his Name;* 2.  
*i. e.* the Perfections of his Nature  
by which he makes himself known,  
and is distinguish'd from every o-  
ther Being. We sing Praise to  
him according to his *excellent Great-* Ps. CL. 2.  
*ness.* *Sing Praises to our King, sing* Ps. XLVII.  
*Praises, for God is the King of all.* 67.  
*the Earth.* *Sing to God, sing Praise,* Psal.  
*extol him that rideth upon the Hea-* LXVIII. 4.  
*vens by his name Jah, and rejoice be-*  
*fore him.* And so of his great Ap-  
pearances in the World: We sing  
of all his *marvellous Works,* and Psal. IX. 1.  
praise him according to his *mighty* Ps. CL. 2.  
*Acts.* *We shew forth his Salvation,* Ps. XCVI.  
*declare his Glory among the Hea-* 1, 2.  
*thens, his Wonders among the Peo-*  
*ple: He is great, and greatly to be*  
*fear'd, above all Gods.*

Ser. III. §. 2. With respect to the proper  
 *Subjects*, who are fit and qualify'd  
 to perform it. I don't deny but  
 a wicked Man may sing the Prai-  
 ses of God, and may receive In-  
 struction and Admonition by what  
 he sings; so all Men are call'd up-  
 on to sing to God their *Maker*.

Psal. C.

But 'tis the more proper Duty of  
 the *Upright*, and such only can  
 reach the full or the principal Ends  
 of it: *Rejoice in the Lord, ye Righteous, for Praise is comely for the Upright.*

Psal.

XXXIII.

I.

There are some Dutys of Reli-  
 gion that are more proper to wic-  
 ked Men, and especially design'd  
 for their good, such as the worst  
 of Men ought to perform, and  
 may hope to find Benefit by: as  
 Prayer, for pardoning Mercy and  
 renewing Grace; hearing the  
 Word, for the Conviction of Con-  
 science, and Instruction in the  
 Truth; Repentance for Sin, &c.  
 But now singing the Praises of the  
 Lord, in its most direct and natural  
 Signification and Use, supposes  
 Conversion, and is the more pro-  
 per Exercise of a regenerate Soul.

They

They are only fit to sing the Praises of God, whose Souls are set right, and can make melody in their Hearts to the Lord; whereas the Praises of wicked Men, in the most artful Tunes, and with the sweetest Voice, is but jarring Discord, and a grating Noise in the Ears of God; like a fine Lesson play'd upon an Instrument unstrung and out of Tune.

Besides, that 'tis the proper Duty of the best *Circumstances*, and the best *Frames* of Mind. Every Duty has its special season, and is more suitable and proper at one time than another: So we humble our selves under the mighty hand of God; we cry to the Lord in Distress, &c. but now we are especially to sing the Praises of God in the most flourishing and prosperous Condition of Life, and the most exalted Frame of Mind: *If Jam. V. 13. any be merry, let him sing Psalms. Eccl. VII. In the time of Prosperity rejoice.* 'Tis then peculiarly suitable when a Man flows with Abundance, and lives at Ease; when he has the highest Relishes of the Divine Favour,

Ser. III. your, and his Heart is warm'd  
 with Divine Love, and full of sweet  
 Experience.

§. 3. With respect to the *Kind* of the Exercise it self. The Divine Authority enstamps a value upon every Duty, and challenges a distinct regard; but singing the Praises of God is the noblest part of Worship, as 'tis the most *unselfish* and disinterested Exercise of the Soul: It has not only the directest respect to God, and that in the highest and most excellent Consideration of him; but it intirely respects him, and is wholly taken up in the Contemplation and Regard of him. 'Tis an Expression of pure Gratitude and Love, the most *generous* Service we perform to God, and carrys in it the liveliest Signatures of a Divine and *God-like* Temper of Mind.

In other Dutys there is a Mixture of *Self* and Interest: Some Necessity urges, some Advantage is propos'd by it. We expect something *from* God in other Services of Worship, in this we offer something *to* him. We make a  
 Tender



Tender of our Praise, and seek Ser. III.  
only his Acceptance: In other things we propose our own good, in this the Glory of God; and of every other Duty this has the most *intire* regard to him.

In a word; to offer Praise to God is the most divine and perfect Action of the Soul, and most eminently *glorifies* him.

Ps. L. ult.

§. 4. With respect to the *Place* where 'tis perform'd. Heaven is a Region of Purity and Glory, the Seat of Perfection and Blessedness: In that State much of our present Work will wholly cease, and all will receive a considerable Change. There are many of the Dutys of Religion, and of the first Rank and Order, that seem calculated to our present State, and have no other use but in this World. Whatsoever supposes our Apostacy from God, or respects our Imperfection and Guilt, will cease to be our Duty, when we come to Heaven and are perfectly recover'd; whatsoever had a Tendency to our Recovery, and is not comprehended under the Duty of Praise.

Ser. III. Praise: We shall rest from the Labour of present Service, and be deliver'd from every Weakness and Defect. Thus *Prayer* will cease when every Want will be perfectly supply'd, and every Desire fully satisfy'd. We shall not need to attend upon *Gospel-Ordinances*, the Instruments and Vehicles of the Divine Presence and Grace in the present distant and imperfect State, where we *know in part*, and *see thro a Glass darkly*; for we shall then *see him as he is*, and that which is *perfect will be come*. Repentance will cease, and *all Tears be wip'd away*; for there will be no more Sin nor Sorrow for ever. *Faith* will vanish at the Presence of its Object, and we shall *walk by Sight, and not by Faith*. *Hope* will be swallow'd up

Rom. VIII. in Fruition: for *Hope that is seen is not Hope*; for what a Man seeth, why doth he yet hope for it? There will be a mighty Alteration in the whole Frame of our present Duty.

But now *Singing* the Praises of God is the Work of Heaven: 'Twill remove with us out of this World,

World, and find Admittance in Ser. III. Glory : Yea Heaven is the proper Seat of Praise, as 'tis of Perfection. The more perfect knowledg of the Glory of God, and fuller Enjoyment of his Love, that render other Means and Dutys needless, and determine their Use, raise this to a higher Perfection, and give it the greater Advantage. The clearer Views of Divine Glory, and the livelier sense of Divine Love, will make our Praise the more in season as well as the more compleat. 'Twill enlarge the Subject of our Song, and raise and exalt our Minds ; and we shall see greater reason, as well as be better capable of singing Hymns of Praise. So that 'tis not only very agreeable to the Heavenly State, but most proper to it : and perhaps we can form no truer Conception of the Work of Heaven than this.


For this reason very probably the Apostle prefers *Love* to *Faith* and *Hope*, as it has a nearer Alliance and Relation to the future World, and is not limited and confin'd

1 Cor.  
XIII. ult.

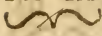
Ser. III. confin'd to this. 'Tis most proper  
 ~~~~~ to the Heavenly State, and will  
 rise to its highest Perfection and
 Glory, when Faith and Hope (at
 least in their present Measures and
 Kinds) will cease of themselves,
 and be wholly laid aside. Here-
 upon,

§. 5. With respect to the *Part-
 ners* and Companions of our Praise,
 our Associates in this blessed Work.
 Praise is sometimes spoken of as
 the Duty of universal Nature, and
 every Creature is call'd upon to
 perform it ; the *Heavens* and
 Ps. LXIX. *Earth*, the *Sun*, and *Moon*, and
 3, 4. *Stars*, the *Dragons* and *Deep*, *Fire*
 Psal. and *Hail*, *Mountains* and *Hills*,
 CXLVIII. *Beasts* and *Cattel*.

But 'tis the proper Work of the
Angels of God, the first Rank of
 created Beings, and of the no-
 blest Powers of Nature; the At-
 tendants on his Throne, and Fa-
 yourites of his Court, that per-
 fectly do his Will, and are the
 Patterns of our Obedience. The
 Job XXXVIII *Morning-Stars sung together, and all*
 7. *the Sons of God shouted for Joy :*
i. e. the Angels of God, the eldest
 Offspring

Offspring of his Power, and the Ser. III.
brightest Images of his Glory. So 
the multitude of the heavenly Host
brought the welcome Tidings of a
Redeemer to the World, in an
Hymn of Praise: *They sung Praise* Luk. II. 13.
to God, saying, Glory to God in the
Highest, &c. and indeed that was
the greatest occasion, and the no-
blest Theme for an Angel's Song.

Yea, this is represented as the
constant Imployment of all the
Blessed above. *The four * Beasts* ^{*Coa, liv-*}
had six Wings, and full of Eyes ^{*ing things.*}
within, and rest not Day and Night, ^{Rev. IV. 8.}
saying, Holy, Holy, Holy Lord
God Almighty, which was, and is,
and is to come. The twenty four El-
ders fell down before him that sitteth
upon the Throne, and worship him
that liveth for ever and ever, and
cast their Crowns before the Throne,
saying, *Thou'rt worthy to receive*
Glory, Honour, Power, for thou hast
made all things, &c. The glori-
fy'd Saints, and Spirits of the per-
fected Just, that are refin'd from
all Allays of Flesh, and advanc'd
to the brightest Glory, they join
in with the sacred Quire, and bear
their

Ser. III.  their part in the Anthems of the Blessed: They strike up their Voices, and mingle Praises with the Seraphim above. The Praises and Triumphs of God, and of the Redeemer, are handed about from Throne to Throne; and the whole heavenly Region rings aloud with

Rev. XV. 13. Acclamations of Joy. *They sung the Song of Moses, the Servant of the Lord, and the Song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy Works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy Ways, thou King of Saints. 'Tis the Voice of all the*

Rev. XIX. 12. *Heavenly Host: I heard a great Voice of much People in Heaven, saying, Hallelujah, Salvation, and Glory, and Honour, and Power unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his Judgments, for he hath judg'd the great Whore, &c. And tho' these Expressions should be thought to have a more direct and immediate Reference to the glorious and triumphant State of the Church in this World, and to be a prophetick Description of its best and happiest Circumstance on Earth; it will equally serve the present*

present purpose, and I suppose Ser. III. ought not to exclude a final and ultimate Reference to its perfect and glorify'd State above.

Particularly, the Sight of the *Lamb* of God in the midst of the Throne, with the Marks of his Sufferings and Glory about him, will be ravishing and transporting to a glorify'd Soul: 'Twill inspire his Heart with Flames of divine Love, and fill his Soul with Extasys of heavenly Joy: 'Twill furnish out the noblest Song of Praise, and give the greatest Enlivening and Elevation of Thought. Hence they are represented in their highest Glory, array'd with Light, bearing Palms of Victory in their Hands, and Crowns of Glory upon their Heads, while they sing his Glory, and celebrate his Praise: *They sung a new Song,* Rev. V. 9: *saying, Thou art worthy to take the Book, and open the Seals, for thou wast slain and hast redeem'd us unto God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred and Tongue, and People and Nation, and made us to our God Kings and Priests. And, Worthy is* the

Ser. III. the Lamb that was slain, to receive

Power and Riches, and Wisdom, and
 Rev. V. II. Strength, and Honour, and Glory and

Rev. VII. Blessing. So we read of a great

9, 10, II. Multitude, which no Man could number, stood before the Throne and before the Lamb, cloth'd with white Robes and Palms in their Hands, that cry'd with a loud Voice, Salvation, &c. and all the Angels stood round about the Throne, and the Elders, and the four Beasts.

In short, 'tis the proper Employment of the best of Creatures, of the whole Society of the Blessed, the general Assembly and
 Heb. XII. Church of the Firstborn. And
 23. παν- methinks there is not a more lively
 γυναι. Emblem, or affecting Representation of Heaven on Earth, than an Assembly of worshipping Christians, singing the Praises of God. This is just as they do in Heaven; so are the Angels imploy'd above; not in Prayer to God, and mourning for Sin, but in Exercises of Love, and Songs of Praise: So the Poet,

— For

————— *For all we know
Of what the Blessed do Above,
Is that they Sing, and that they
Love.*

§. 6. With respect to its *Dura-
tion* and Continuance. Other Du-
tys cease, as the Reason of them
ceases; but singing Praise will last
for ever, and be the Work of a
whole Eternity. 'Tis the perpe-
tual Exercise of the Blessed, as
the Reason and Ground of it is
perpetual; and after the Revolu-
tion of numberless Ages, will ne-
ver decay or grow out of Date.
There will be constant and grow-
ing occasion of Praise to all E-
ternity. The Subject of their
Song will never be exhausted, and
never fail; but the clearer and
fuller Displays of Divine Perfec-
tion will open new Scenes of Glo-
ry, and furnish fresh variety of
Matter for eternal Praise.

And their Souls will never be
unstrung and out of tune; there
will be nothing to disturb their
Joys, or interrupt the Harmony
of

Ser. III. of their Praise. They shall never
 ~~~~~ hang their Harps upon the Wil-  
 lows, or sit disconsolate more:  
 They will wind up the Strings of  
 their sacred Lyre, and raise their  
 Notes to the highest Pitch of Praise:  
 They will sing the *Songs of Sion*,  
 and the *new Song*, with fresh Vigour  
 of Mind, and with perpetual  
 PS. CIV. Youth: *I will sing unto the Lord as*  
 33. *long as I live, I will sing Praise to*  
*my God while I have any Being.*

I shall close the whole with two  
*practical* Reflections, that will fit-  
 ly respect the two parts of this  
 Discourse.

I. How infinitely excellent must  
*God* be that is the Object of all  
 our Praise, to whom all our Praise  
 is directed, and who is the sub-  
 ject Matter of them all! Every  
 Psalm of Praise is an Hymn to  
 God, and Display of some or o-  
 ther of his Perfections. The Di-  
 vine Glory gives the truest Beau-  
 ty, and the brightest Lustre to e-  
 very Song of Praise. A naked  
 Relation of Divine Perfection,  
 without the Aids of Eloquence  
 and



and Art, will make a more illustrious Description than the finest Allusions, and the most exquisite Fictions of human Fancy and Wit. It receives a Nobleness and Dignity from its Subject; and abstract it from God, and it presently loses its Perfection and Glory.

Yea, the Divine Glory rises above the loftiest Praise; and we fall vastly short of his just Praise when we soar highest in our Acknowledgments, and are most enlarg'd. The Heathen Poets adorn'd the Praises of their Deitys and Heroes with all the Figures of Speech, and Fiction of the Mind, and sometimes with the borrow'd Glories of the true God; but the divine Being far exceeds in great Reality the highest Flights and boldest Figures of even *Poetick* Licence and Rage. There are vast Reaches of unknown Perfection beyond the Discovery of an Eye of Sense, or Comprehension of a finite Mind, above all the Songs and Triumphs of Angels and Men.

And how infinitely excellent a Being must he needs be, who is the

F

Sub-

Ser. III. Subject of our Songs, and the  
 ~~~~~ Glory of them too; who furnishes Matter of perpetual Praise to all the Saints below, and all the Blessed above, to the *Hallelujahs* of Heaven, and *Hosannahs* of Earth; whose Perfection inspires the Matter of our Song, and the devoutest Affections of Soul; that gives the greatest Glory to every one, and far exceeds them all? Contemplate the Divine Being as the Object of our Praise; adore the Divine Glory that is so illustriously great, that reaches wider than the Earth, rises higher than the Heavens, and shines with a surpassing and perpetual Brightness.

2. With what *Frames* of Soul should we perform this excellent Duty! If the Duty it self be so noble and high, the Frame of our Spirits should not be low and mean: If in so many respects it exceed other Dutys of Religion, how spiritual and rais'd should be the Temper of our Minds?

Keep a Guard upon the *Senses* as well as the Thoughts in singing
 the

the Praises of God, that the Heart Ser. III.
ben't diverted by sensible Pleasure,
or too close Attendance to the
Rules of Art, the Harmony and
Proportion of Numbers, or the
Melody and Sweetness of Sounds.
Let the Soul be rais'd and suitably
mov'd; let the Heart and Voice
join together, and the Affections
keep pace with the Tongue.

If the Heart be absent or out of
tune, 'twill spoil the Musick of the
sweetest Song, and render the sof-
test Voice, like *tinkling Cymbal*
or *sounding Brass*, inharmonious
and disagreeable in the Ears of
God.

This will be the Work of Hea-
ven; Labour after an heavenly
Frame of Mind: 'Twill be the
Work of a whole Eternity; let us
begin the blessed Exercise now,
and inure our selves beforehand.
Let us so sing the *Psalms of David*
here on Earth, that we may sing
the *Song of Moses*, the Servant of
the Lord, and the *Song of the*
Lamb for ever. *Amen.*

✓
OBJECTIONS *consider'd against the Duty*
of SINGING.

SERMON IV.

PSAL. LXVII. 3, 4.

*Let all the People praise thee, O
 God, let all the People praise
 thee : O let the Nations be
 glad, and sing for Joy.*

I Am to answer the *Objections*
against Singing in the Worship
of God. This is the only
 thing that can be thought unplea-
 sant in our whole Undertaking;
 and 'twere pity to interrupt the
 Harmony

Harmony of our Discourses with Ser. IV. the ungrateful Jarrings and Discords of *Controversy* (the most unfutable thing in the World to our present Subject) did not the Difficultys and Scruples of some People require it.

That I may perform what is expected from me, I shall but just mention the Argument in my Text, and then reply to the most *considerable Objections* that are produc'd against this Duty.

In the Verse foregoing the *Psal.*¹ Ver. 2. *mist* prays for the Conversion of the *Gentiles*, That God would make *known* his way upon Earth, his *saving Health* among all Nations; then follow the words of my Text, *Let the People praise thee, O God, let all the People praise thee*: intimating, that the knowledg of Salvation would be such an infinite Mercy to the World, as not only to invite, but oblige all *Mankind* to publish and resound the Praises of God. And that we may not be at a loss how this ought to be perform'd, he expresses himself more clearly in the following

Ser. IV. words: *O let the Nations be glad, and sing for Joy*; i. e. express their Praises in joyful Songs and Triumphs, as the word in the Original does plainly signify. So that to praise God by *Singing* is a Practice not only very *surable* to the State of the Gospel, but a Duty now to be perform'd by all People; as being what was not only pray'd for, but foretold of antient time by the inspir'd Prophet.

And is it not then strange, that a Duty so reasonable and becoming, so clear and express, so noble and excellent, so pleasant and useful, as appears from the foregoing Discourses, should meet with opposition from any? When if we remain silent, or *hold our Peace*, it might be expected (if such a thing were possible) that as our Lord himself speaks, *the Stones would immediately cry out*. And had we such a sense of the adorable Majesty and Perfections of God, and those immense Benefits he hath bestow'd upon us, as they deserve, we should find the Practice

Ver. 4.

נְנִיחַ
א 121.

Cantare
præ læ-
titia,

Buxt. Opus
XXX An-
norum,

Luk. XIX.
40.

tice we are pleading for necessary, if it were only for the *Relief of our Nature*; nay sometimes, for ought I know, for the *Preservation of Life it self*: for our Hearts might be ready to burst, and we might even die under our Joys, if in some special Cases we should not be allow'd giving them vent in the loftiest Strains, and loudest Shouts of Thanksgiving and Praise.

But blessed be God, among those who have formerly oppos'd this Practice of Singing, there are many now convinc'd of its being a Gospel-Duty; and they who in this particular dissent from us, are considerably lessen'd in their Numbers. This is owing to the *successful Industry* of several of their *worthy Ministers*, whom God hath rais'd up from among themselves, who have strenuously asserted and vindicated this Practice, and hereby had occasion of giving proof not only of their Skill in *Argument*, but in the *Art* too they have defended, by those excellent Composures wherewith *One* of them hath oblig'd the Christian Church.


Ser. IV.

 Mr. Maiters, Mr. Collins, Mr. Allen, Mr. Stennett, Mr. Piggott, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Keach.
 Mr. Stennett.

Ser. IV. And therefore what hath been perform'd of late years might have superseded any further Attempt of this kind, were it not that in this Publication there is intended *a more ample and compleat Treatise of Psalmody*, than any we have seen extant; and 'tis fit that in this place we take notice of the Objections that are made against this Duty, in answering of which I shall offer some things that I do not find observ'd by those that have gone before me. And that this Discourse may not exceed in proportion those of my Brethren, it must not be expected I reply to *every* Objection, only to the most considerable; which if fairly answer'd, the others will fall of course; as when we lop off the main Boughs of a Tree, all the other little Branches and Twigs do fall along with them. I shall dispose them into the following Order, and consider,

I. Those Objections that are level'd against the *Duty* of Singing.

II. Against

II. Against the *Matter* to be Ser. IV.
sang. 

III. Against the *Persons* to be
imploy'd. And,

IV. Against the *Manner* of the
Performance.

I. They that oppose the Duty,
do assert, *It is antiquated with the
Ceremonial Law*; that now it is
needless under the Gospel; that it is
without Prescription; and that it is
very unsuitable to the present bewil-
dred and afflicted State of the Church.

§. 1. They represent this Prac-
tice *as antiquated*, and object a-
gainst it *as a part of the Ceremonial
Worship under the Law*, which is
abolish'd; and they imagine we
are now to praise God only by
making secret melody in the Heart,
without any artificial. Tunes or
Modulation of the Voice.

That which hath led them into
this *Mistake*, is the wrong Opi-
nion they have conceiv'd of this
Duty, as being *purely Ceremonial*;
whereas among the *Jews* it was
really of a *mixt nature*, viz. part-
ly *Ceremonial*, and partly *Moral*.

Ser. IV. What was Ceremonial refer'd on-
 ly to the *manner* of Performance
 under the *Levitical Priesthood*,
 which was in a very pompous man-
 ner, with a variety of musical In-
 struments, and Persons, who as
 Officers or Masters in Musick, did
 direct and preside in the manage-
 ment of it. This, I am of Opi-
 nion, did die and was bury'd with
 the *Jewish Ceremonys*; but the Prac-
 tice of *Singing* still remains as a
 part of *natural Religion*, and is of
 standing and universal Obligation:
 This, if duly consider'd, wou'd I
 hope remove the Difficultys a-
 bout this Duty. The use of mu-
 sical Instruments, &c. was only a
ceremonial Appendage or external
 Solemnity, and of it self no *ra-
 tional* part of Worship; but to
sing forth the Praises of God with
 our Lips is of a different nature,
 and falls under another Consid-
 eration. And tho the *Jewish* man-
 ner of performing this Duty be
 now ceas'd, it does not follow
 that therefore there must be no
 Singing at all; or that because the
Harp and *Cymbal* are laid aside,
 our

our *Mouths* must be seal'd up too. Ser. IV.
 None can be ignorant how strenuously the Apostle *Paul* does plead for the *abolishing* of the *Jewish* Ceremonys, and particularly in the second Chapter of his Epistle to the *Colossians*; and yet in the very next Chapter he *recommends* to them the Practice of *singing Psalms*, which certainly he would never have done were this to have been rank'd among the number of the former. His exhorting them to do this with *Col. III. Grace in their Hearts*, and to make *16. melody in their Hearts to the Lord*, Eph. V. 19. does no way forbid vocal Singing; any more than because it was their Duty also to pray with the Heart, they ought not to use their Voice in Prayer. It is evident this was only to direct them in Singing, that while they were employ'd in the outward Duty, they should take care it be with a suitable Disposition of Spirit, both being put together, *Singing and making melody in the Heart.*

To conclude, it should methinks tend to reconcile Persons to this Practice,

Ser. IV. Practice, that we plead for no
 more than what is *necessary* to the
 decent and lively discharge of a
 Duty which is written with the
 Pen of Nature upon Mens Hearts;
 letting all other pompous Obser-
 vances remain where our Saviour
 and his Apostles left them: and
 if Singing in the Worship of God
 be a part of natural Religion, it
 answers

§. 2. The next Objection against
 it *as a needless thing*: For what can
 be more necessary than that which
 our Reason dictates to be a piece
 of Homage, indispensibly due
 from Creatures to their Maker
 and Benefactor? To say that prai-
 sing of God by Singing is needless
 or superfluous, because it *may be*
done as well by Prayer, is a mistake;
 which may be evinc'd from the
 nature of the thing, as well as ex-
 perience. Besides, we are not to
 take the Measures of our Duty
 from what *we* judg proper or
 needful, but from the *Will* and
 Command of Christ *. It would
 be, I confess, an expeditious way
 to shrink Religion into a meagre
 Skeleton,

* Eph. V.
 19. Col.
 III. 16.
 Jam. V. 13.

Skeleton, a thin Shadow, if we were oblig'd to do no more than what our corrupt and self-indulgent Nature should think necessary: Might we not then argue as strongly against the Lord's Supper? Can you not think of his dying Love when you pray or hear the Word preach'd? What need of going to the Table? But as this is an Ordinance, own'd to be instituted on purpose for the commemorating of Christ's Death and Sufferings; so why may not singing of Psalms be a distinct Ordinance, appointed for the celebrating in an especial manner the Praises of God? And can we be so disingenuous as to refuse exalting the Name of God in any way that is possible and lawful for us, who in such numberless ways hath been infinitely merciful and gracious to us?

§. 3. 'Tis objected that this is a Practice *without New Testament Prescription*; and would you have us sing without warrant from Christ? To make good this Objection, they endeavour to enervate the

Ser. IV. the force of those Passages we produce from the New Testament for the establishing our Practice.

Matth.
XXVI. 30.
ὕμνησαν-
τες.

As to that which mentions our Saviour's *singing an Hymn with the Disciples*, they would make us believe the original word imports no more than simple *giving of Thanks*, without Singing; but all who understand *Greek*, and will be *impartial*, must confess that the word does in its primary and proper sense signify such a praising of God as is perform'd by Singing. To cite Authoritys can be of no use to the *Unlearn'd*, and to those who are conversant in this Tongue it is notorious; besides, the sense of this word is so fully clear'd in some late Treatises, that I shall refer you to them*, where you have the Judgment of *Austin*, *Constantine*, *Suidas*, *Calvin*, *Beza*, and our Countrymen *Ainsworth*, *Leigh*, and many more that might be added. But it may suffice to

* *Singing of Psalms vindicated from the Charge of Novelty*, printed by Mr. Parkhurst. *Mr. Allen's Essay*, and *the Vindication of it*.

convince the unskilful Reader of Ser. IV. the sense of the word *Hymn* (which is but an abbreviation of the Greek word ὕμνος, or *Hymnos*) that *learned Men*, by common Consent, have adopted it into the *English Language* to signify a grave Song of Praise. To conclude, we have reason to acquiesce in this sense of the word, inasmuch as it is generally acknowledg'd our Saviour did actually *sing* after his last Supper*, according to the custom of the *Jews*, who in the Paschal Night, after they had eaten the Lamb, did use to sing some of *David's Psalms*; which solemn Hymns they call the great *Hallel*, and which began at *Psal. CXIII.* and ended with *Psal. CXVIII.* Hence therefore the word ὑμνοῦντες must imply more than bare giving of Thanks, viz. such a giving of Thanks as hath Singing conjoin'd with it.

To those Places in *St. Paul's Epistles* which we alledg for this

* See Lightfoot, Patrick, Jurieu, Whitby, &c.

Ser. IV. Duty, they say the Apostle requires *speaking* only, and *teaching*

Col. III.

16.

Eph. V. 19.

and *admonishing* one another. They can't deny they are further directed to *sing*, and to *make melody* :

but they evade this, by telling us, it is confin'd wholly to the Heart ;

singing with Grace in your Hearts, so *singing and making melody in your Hearts to the Lord* : and that these Expressions have no respect at all to *vocal Singing*. This we deny, and say, that those who dissent from us must acknowledg these Actions of *speaking*, *teaching* and *admonishing*, do undeniably imply the use of the *Voice*. This being granted, the *Nature* of the things, in which we are to use our *Voice*, do sufficiently determine the *manner* of doing it, viz.

by *Singing* ; the Duty requir'd being such as was to be perform'd in *Psalms*, *Hymns*, and *Spiritual Songs*, which all who are impartial and ingenuous must own were compos'd and form'd for *Singing*. But the Apostle says, *Singing with Grace in your Hearts*, and *making melody in your Hearts* : 'Tis granted,

ted,

ted, and no doubt 'tis a great Du-Ser. IV.
ty to do so; but then this was
not to exclude singing with the
Voice, but only to caution us that
we rest not in the *external part* of
the Duty. But how can we *teach*
and *admonish* one another in Sing-
ing? I reply, it would be no wrong
done to the Text, if we say that
the word *ἑαυτοῖς*, *one another*, may
be rendred [your selves] for so
our Translators have rendred the
same word, Eph. V. 19. And in-
deed while we are singing, we
have a special Opportunity and
Help to instruct and admonish *our*
own Souls; as that by dilating the
Sound, and prolonging the Voice,
there is more time given for the
fixing our Hearts upon that which
is sung with more delightful Me-
ditation. But as I do not deny
the word may be and is translated
to one another, so how our *mutual* In-
struction and Edification is pro-
moted in the practice of Singing,
is plainly and fully set forth al-
ready by him who from this Text
hath open'd the nature of the
Duty. Thus I have with brevity
vindi-

Ser.' IV, vindicated the *principal Places* of the New Testament, that are produc'd for this Duty of Singing, from the Exceptions that are brought against them. There are some other Scriptures which will fall in our way to be spoken to in their proper Places.

§. 4. The last Objection against Singing in the Worship of God is, That it is *unfutable to the present bewildred and afflicted State of the Church*.

There is so little in this, that there needs not much to be spoken to it: Besides, I do not find it urg'd in the Writings of our *modern Opposers*, who seem to have dropt it, as being conscious, I suppose, of the Weakness of it. The Church's Afflictions are so far from being an Objection, that I think them rather an Argument for the performance of this Duty; and *because* she is in a bewildred State, she has the greater need of something to recreate and refresh her, which might be like giving

Prov. XXXI. 6. *of Wine to him that is of a heavy Heart.* And it is worthy our notice,

tice, that many of the Psalms are Ser. IV.
wonderfully suited to the lowest
Condition and most afflicted State
of the Church, plainly enough sig-
nifying the end of their Compos-
ure, and when we ought to make
use of them. And we do not find
the *Jews*, tho often brought into
a very low and bewildred Condi-
tion, did upon this account desist
from this part of religious Wor-
ship. We read indeed that when
they were under the *Babylonish*
Captivity, they hung *their Harps* Psalm
upon the Willows; but the follow-CXXXvii.
ing words give us reason to be-
lieve this was upon a very *singular*
occasion; viz. when their *Enemys*
did *insult* over them, and by way
of *Scorn* did require them to en-
tertain 'em with some of their
Musick, and let 'em hear one of
those Songs which were wont to
be sung in the Temple: otherwise
'tis more than probable they did
now and then refresh themselves
with this Divine Musick, and for
this, when led into Captivity,
they carry'd their Harps along
with them from *Jerusalem*, or pro-
cur'd

Ser. IV. cur'd those Instruments in *Babylon*, tho now upon the insulting and barbarous usage of their Enemies they laid them aside *. Much more might be said in answer to this Objection, but I have spent too much time upon it already. I come

* Jam. V.
13. is con-
sider'd al-
ready in
Serm. II.

II. To the second Class of Objections, viz. such as are level'd against *the Matter of the Duty*. Those mention'd are against the *Act* of Singing; *these* against the *Matter* that is usually sung in our publick Assemblies, viz. the Psalms of *David*, *Asaph* and others. Here it is objected, That *the Matter of them frequently does not suite our Case*: That there are many Passages we cannot sing with Truth, nor others with Charity; and furthermore, to use these in the Worship of God is to introduce a Form, and to stint and limit the Gifts of the Spirit.

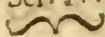
Before I reply to these Objections, I shall give you a brief Account of our Opinion concerning the Matter to be sung in publick Worship. And,

I. Tho

1. Tho we approve and shall Ser. IV. presently vindicate the Practice of our Churches in singing *David's* Psalms, yet we are not against other Composures. However,

2. What of *this kind* may be allow'd to be sung, we should advise the *Matter* of them to be collected from the *Holy Scriptures*; in turning of which into *Metre*, a diligent regard ought to be had to the *Text*, and the *Sense* at least to be carefully retain'd: and it may not be amiss that we here caution against too great a liberty to the flights of a *Poetical Fancy*, lest by being too *profuse*, it detract from the *Sense* and *Beauty* of the *Scriptures*, which always appear *best* in their own naked *Simplicity*.

3. We do not this out of any mean, irreverent and unbecoming Thoughts of *David's* Psalms, or that we would discard these from having their part in the Worship of God; but that adding others to them, we may still have a *fuller Set* of Psalms, and a more *abundant variety* of spiritual Songs to promote

Ser. IV.  promote and further the celebrating of God's Praises in the Christian Church; and these being for the *Matter* of them collected from the *Scriptures*, there is no *Addition* made to the Word of God hereby, as many will be ready otherwise to object.

Having thus given our Opinion about the *Matter to be sung*, I shall now consider the Objections that are made against the use of *David's Psalms*, and give you in a narrow Compass the *Heads* only of those Replies which may be made unto them, referring the Reader to such Authors as insist more largely upon them.

§. 1. 'Tis objected, - That the *Matter of these Psalms* does not correspond to the present Case and Occasions of God's People, as more Evangelical Composes would do.

To this we shall only say, if it be impartially consider'd, we shall find a great many at least of the *Psalms* very well adapted to the Case and Circumstances both of the Church in general, and each particular Member of it; and provided

vided there be due care taken of a Ser. IV. wise and prudent choice of the *Psalm* to be sung (which is ordinarily done in our Assemblies) I think it will very much abate the force of this Objection. And even where the Matter is not so *sutable* to the present Case, yet it having been the *Case*, of others, we may find Profit in our *Meditations* upon it, by learning *Instruction*, and being *admonish'd* and *exhorted* to our Duty from it; and this the Apostle represents as one main end of singing *Psalms*, and *Hymns*, and *spiritual Songs*.

§. 2. 'Tis objected there are many *Passages* in David's *Psalms* we cannot sing with Truth, nor others with Charity.


What is hinted under the foregoing Objection might serve to answer this, viz. if we cannot express them as our own Case, we may meet with *Instruction*, *Conviction*, *Counsel* and *Comfort* from them; and to sing the Case of others, with this view, is no more lying to God (as some pretend) than reading the same Passages with the

See Mr. Ford's Vindication of Scripture-Psalms.

Ser. IV. the like view. As to those which they say we cannot sing with *Charity*, such as are *Imprecations* and *Curses* upon wicked Men; whereas the Gospel teaches us to wish Evil to no Man, but to desire the Good of All; I shall only say, that we are not to wish the Judgments and Curses of God upon any as *Enemies* to our *private* Persons and *Interests*; however (tho the *Imprecations* in *David's* Psalms were immediate *Inspirations*, and perhaps often *Predictions* that are not to be drawn into Example) yet so far as it appears Men are *implacable* Enemies to Christ and his Kingdom, we may imprecate the Judgments of God upon them. But granting these Passages were unsutable to an *Evangelical* Spirit, yet a good Improvement may be made of them in our Meditations, as has been already suggested.

§. 3. 'Tis further objected, that the use of Scripture-Psalms will introduce a *Form*, and to sing by a prelimited and prestinted Form is to lay a *Restraint* upon the Spirit of God.

This

This is no Restraint when the Ser. IV.
Duty cannot be *otherwise* perform'd. 

To urge this Objection is to say,
that either we must *not sing at all*,
or that what is sung be as to the
Matter of it *immediately indited*,
or an *extempore* Effusion: For if
we must not sing by a *Scripture-*
Form, neither ought we to sing by
a form of *human Composure*. And
if the Matter to be sung must be
immediately indited, then either
there can be but one sing at a
time; or if every one be allow'd,
then it must be by the other's pen-
ning or reciting what is in his
Mind, and so it becomes a *Form*
to all the rest. There is no way
then of Singing left, but to sup-
pose every Person to have the
Gift of immediate composing;
but then should these sing all to-
gether, what Disorder and Con-
fusion may we imagine it must
produce in the Church? For we
cannot suppose (as not having any
Instance of it) that every one
should have the same Thoughts,
express the same Words and Num-
bers too, and sing in the same

G

Tune

Ser. IV. Tune at the same time. From whence it follows, that either there must be no Singing at all in the Church; or if it be done to Edification, it must be by a *Form*, the *Nature* of the Duty being such as to require it. The Case of Singing is not the same with that of Prayer: for Prayer may be perform'd without a Form, there being but one Person who is the mouth of all the rest; but Singing cannot, because there every one is to use his own Mouth: And therefore it is no stinting of the Spirit to do that by a Form, which cannot be otherwise done without a *Miracle*. And thus I have answer'd those Objections that are level'd against the Matter of the Duty. We proceed,

III. To those that are produc'd against the Persons to be employ'd in this Duty of Singing. If Singing in the Worship of God may be allow'd, some will tell us, That according to Primitive Practice but one Person ought to perform this Office in the Church: Others are for
excluding

excluding Women from the benefit of Ser. IV. this Ordinance. But the last Ob-

jection, and which carries the greatest plausibleness with it, is against promiscuous Singing; that is, the concurrence of Good and Bad together in this Work: *For wicked Men, they think, cannot sing God's Praises, and good People ought not to do it in their Company.* I shall reply to what is objected under these Particulars.

§. 1. That *one only as the Mouth ought to sing*, and the rest to concur with their *silent Consent*; as in Prayer the Minister is the Mouth, and the rest join with their secret *Amen*. The ground they have for this Objection must be *Scripture-Evidence, or Primitive Practice*. To begin with the latter, I do not find they have any thing from *Primitive Practice* (after the ceasing of extraordinary Gifts) that gives them the least Countenance.

A learned * Author tells ^{* Inquiry into the Constitut. and Worship of the Primitive Church.} us, " That the Manner of the
" Primitive Singing was such as
" the People bore a part in it: ^{of the Pri}
And Origen gives us this account of ^{mitive} it, ^{Church.}

Ser. IV. it, " That it was ἑμμελῶς καὶ συμφῶνως,
 De Ora- " in good Tune and Concert; i. e.
 rione. the People singing with their Voi-
 ces all together. *Pliny* the younger
 tells us, " That in his time Chris-
 " tians us'd to meet together be-
 " fore day, *Carmen Christo dicere*
 " *secum invicem*. Some quote
 this Passage to prove Antiphonal
 Singing, and tell you the words
 are to be thus rendred, " They
 " sung an Hymn by course, or one
 " against another; tho doubtless
 they are here more truly rendred,
 They sung a Hymn one with ano-
 ther, or *among themselves*: and
 they who understand the Genius
 of the Latin Tongue will allow it.

Introduet. And the learned Dr. *Cave* does
to Lives of thus translate that Passage. But
Prim. Fa- this is not the Matter here in
thers. See dispute; be this how it will, it is
Discourse of most plain from hence, that the
Cathedral People bore a part in this Work of
Worship. Singing, and that it was not com-
 mitted only to the performance of
 one Person. I shall say no more,
 but recommend to those who have
 an inclination to consult further a-
 bout this Matter, the perusal of a

little

little anonymous Treatise lately Ser. IV. publish'd, and entitled, *Singing of Psalms vindicated from the charge of Novelty.* You see then there is no foundation for this Objection in Primitive Practice.

If there be any force in it, 'tis from Scripture-Evidence, and the chief they produce is in those words of the Apostle: *How is it* 1 Cor. *then, Brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a Psalm, hath a Doctrine, hath a Tongue, &c.* i. e. as *Beza* observes, one hath a Psalm, another hath a Doctrine, another hath a Tongue; not that every one had all these. Now, says the Apostle, *let all things be done unto edifying.* He speaks here of the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit: To one was given the Gift of Tongues, to another the Gift of Prophecy, to another the Gift of composing Psalms by the afflation of the Spirit, as Dr. *Hammond* observes upon the place; now let all things be done unto edifying. And how must this be? why not that all should exercise these Gifts at the same time, but

Ser. IV. one after another, as you may see
 ~~~~~ in the 31<sup>st</sup> Verse; *Ye may all prophesy, says the Apostle, one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.* He directs them to do it *one by one*, that is, one at a time; so he that had the Gift of Psalmody, he alone must sing for that time. And it being an extraordinary Gift confin'd to that Person, it requir'd this extraordinary way of performing it, and cou'd not be otherwise. The Inference which those that dissent from us draw from hence, is this, *That only one Person ought to sing in the Church, and the rest, as in Prayer, to join with their secret Consent.*

The Answer which may be given to this is, I think, very easy and plain; for tho it be granted the Apostle speaks here of the *extraordinary* Gift of Psalmody, which some had in the times of the Apostle (And this seems to be one way of Prophefying, and a method which in those times the Holy Ghost did use to instruct and edify the People; and therefore when there were any, who  
 were




were thus directed to exercise Ser. IV. their Gift, the People ought to give their attendance to it) yet we challenge any Persons to prove that the Christian Church had *no other way* of singing Psalms than this. We do assert the contrary, and that besides this extraordinary Gift, it was the Practice of the Church to sing *all together*, or with consent of Voices. That this was their *more ordinary* and *stated way* of worshipping God, there are Examples already given of it by him who hath undertaken to prove the Duty. Besides, the *Gentile Church*, in thus singing the Praises of God, does but fulfil the *Prophecy* in my Text, and many others that are mention'd of her in the Old Testament. The exercise therefore of an extraordinary Gift, as it is no proof that the Church had *no other way* of singing the Praises of God; so *that* being now *ceas'd*, is much less an Argument against our present Practice; nay is rather an *Argument* to confirm it.

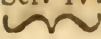
Ser. IV. §. 2. Another Objection is rais'd  
 against *Womens Singing*.

As to this I do not find they have any thing to support it from *antient Practice*: For if we consult *Antiquity*, we shall find *Women* were permitted to sing in the Church as well as Men. Of *Women singing* in the *Primitive Church*, we find *Tertullian* \*, *Socrates*, *Theodoret*, and others make mention. That which our *Opposers* harp upon are those *Places* of the *Apostle*, *1 Cor. XIV. 34.* and *1 Tim. II. 11.* where he enjoineth *Silence to Women*, and that they be not permitted to *speak* or *teach in the Churches*. But to any who consult those *Passages*, and the *Scope* of the *Apostle*, it will appear his words are to be confin'd only to the *Womens* usurping an *Authority to prophesy*, and become *publick Instructors* in the Church. This upon many Ac-

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\* Quantam autem castigationem merebuntur illæ, quæ inter *Psalinos*, vel in quacunque *Dei* mentione, relectæ perseverant? *L. de Virgin. vel. 16.*

counts would be very indecent; Ser. IV.  
 and therefore in such a capacity,   
 and in this way, he would not  
*suffer a Woman to speak, but to be*  
*in Silence:* Nay, if it were only to  
 ask a Question, in order to be re-  
 solv'd, he would not have them  
 propound it publickly, but to ask  
 their Husbands at home: *For it is*  
*a shame* (says he) *for Women to*  
*speak in the Church;* i. e. to pro-  
 pound any thing publickly before  
 the Assembly, either out of pre-  
 tence to inform others, or tho it  
 were only to be inform'd them-  
 selves. It will be evident to any  
 who consult these Places, that the  
 Apostle confines himself to this:  
 And therefore here is nothing  
 that should debar Women from  
 bearing a part in Psalmody,  
 and joining with the Church in  
*praising God* by singing, it being *no*  
*Act* of Authority, and the Reason  
 of it *common*. Besides, it being,  
 as I mention'd before, a part of  
 natural Religion, Women are to  
 reckon themselves oblig'd to the  
 performance of it, who have as  
 many Considerations to induce and

Ser. IV.  ingage them as the Men. And next to praying in secret, and instructing their Children and young Ones at home, I know not in what they can so well imploy this noble and glorious Instrument the Tongue, than in singing the Praises of God in his Church. And whether this may not be one, if not a *principal* Reason, why God, in his adorable Wisdom, has distinguish'd by its pleasant Softness the Voice of the Woman from that of the Man, to temper the Sound, and render it more sweet and melodious when they are join'd together in singing his Praises, is what I have thought not altogether unworthy of our Consideration. It has therefore, I must confess, been with some Concern and Offence that I have observ'd many Women sitting in the publick Assembly, as having nothing to do when the Praises of God have been sung by others. They have taken no part in this heavenly Exercise, as tho it were not allow'd them; or if it be, they had no Inclination or Heart  
unto

unto it. I wish such as have in-Ser. IV.  
dulg'd themselves in this culpa-  
ble Omission would henceforwards  
reform. But,

§. 3. The last Objection I think  
worth mentioning at present is  
against *promiscuous Singing*, the  
Concurrence of Good and Bad in  
this Work : *For wicked Men, they  
think, cannot sing the Praises of God,  
and good People ought not to do it in  
their Company.*

In answer to this we readily  
confess, that no People have so  
much Cause, or have their Hearts  
so well qualify'd to sing the Praises  
of God as devout and holy Souls :  
Further, that the wicked or unre-  
generate cannot sing, nor indeed  
perform *any other Duty* as they  
ought : They cannot *make Melody  
to the Lord*, as the Apostle directs,  
by *singing with Grace in their Hearts*.  
All this is readily granted, but  
what will our Opposers infer from  
hence? That therefore ungracious  
Persons ought not to ingage in  
this Duty? Or that good People  
ought to refrain from this part of  
the Worship of God, while *they*  
are



Ser. IV. are present? I think neither. If  
 ~~~~~ the Reason be conclusive in this,  
 it should be acknowledg'd so in a
 parallel Case: If unregenerate Per-
 sons may not praise God, neither
 ought they to pray to him (nor
 indeed perform any Act of reli-
 gious Worship) for ungracious
 Prayer is as unacceptable to God
 as ungracious Psalmody, and the
 same may be said of other Dutys.

But we answer further, that
 Mens unfitness for Duty does not
 disannul their Obligation to the
 performance of it. It is their
 Duty to pray to God, and to praise
 him, this is of natural and neces-
 sary Obligation: And being their
 Duty, they ought to perform it
 with Grace in their Hearts. That
 they do not is their Sin, but
 then wholly to omit it would
 be a greater Sin: The one is Hy-
 pocrisy, the other Atheism.

Again, tho it be true that wic-
 ked People cannot praise God for
 those things which the Regene-
 rate can, nor what they do of
 this kind can they do it in such a
 manner; yet they have many
 things

things to adore and bless God for, Ser. IV.
as the Excellencys of his Nature, his wonderful Perfections, manifested and display'd in the Works of Creation and Providence. They have many temporal Blessings, Preservations and Deliverances, and which yet lead to higher ones, to praise him for. They ought to bless him for the Mercys of his common Bounty, when they cannot praise him for the Blessings of his special Grace. Hence therefore we find there is a general Command upon all Men to sing and give Thanks unto the Lord:

Sing unto the Lord all the Earth. So, Ps. XCVI. Make a joyful Noise all ye Lands. ^{1.}

And, *Sing unto God ye Kingdoms of the Earth.* And it hath been well observ'd upon the CVIth Psalm, ^{Ps. C. 1, 2.} ^{Ps. LXVIII} ^{32.}

That Travellers, Prisoners, sick People, Seamen being sav'd from several Distresses, they are all of them commanded to praise the Lord for his Goodness, and to declare his Wonders before the Sons of Men. ^{Read from v. 6, to 37.}

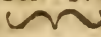
And as the Unregenerate may thus have many things to praise God

Ser. IV. God for, so they are capable of retaining some sense of these Mercys upon their Hearts, and by the Advantage of *common Grace* are capable of making *some Returns* of Gratitude for the same; tho what they do of this kind falls short of saving Sincerity.

After all, they are capable of receiving Instruction, Admonition, and Counsel, from singing the Praises of God; which, as I have said, is one great End of this Duty.

It being so then, that an indispensable Command is laid upon All, that nothing can disannul the Obligation, that the worst of Men have many Mercys to praise God for; that they are capable of retaining some Sense of these Mercys, and making some Returns of Gratitude, and of being admonish'd in the Performance of this Duty: Upon all these accounts they ought not to be depriv'd of the Privilege of singing the Praises of God.

That which concerns the other part of the Objection, *That good Men ought not to do it in their Company,*

pany, is no better than mere Ca-Ser. IV.
vil: For the foregoing part of the 
Objection being answer'd, this
must fall to the ground of course.

For if unregenerate Men *may*,
and it is their *Duty*, to sing the
Praises of God; it is doubtless no
sin in good Men to join with them
in it, or to do it where they are
present. How unfit soever the
one are for the discharge of their
Duty, it need not unfit nor ought
it to hinder the other from per-
forming theirs. That will never
be imputed to us as our Sin,
which it was not in our power to
help or mend. If Hypocrites and
wicked Men do join with us in
Singing, we do not therefore join
with them in their Sin. If they
pretend to sing the Praises of God,
but do it not with Grace in their
Hearts, we cannot help that; and
their Sin does not infect or pollute
us. If they be not what they
profess, 'tis not our Profession is
false (so be our Hearts are right)
but theirs that is so. *Unto the* Titus I. 15.

*Pure all things are pure, but unto
them that are desil'd and unbelieving,
nothing*

Ser. IV. *nothing is pure.* By which it is plain, that what's impure to them that are defil'd, is not made impure to them that are pure.

And thus I have answer'd the Objections that are offer'd under this Head, which relates to the Persons to be concern'd in this Gospel-Duty of Psalmody. I come to the

IVth and last Head of Objections, which concerns *the Manner of Singing.* And here several Queries are us'd to be put; as, *Is it lawful to sing in Metre? So, What Warrant have we to sing with artificial Tunes? May we sing without reading? Is Antiphonal Singing lawful? or, May we sing with musical Instruments?*

As to the two former of these Objections, *viz. Singing in Metre, and artificial Tunes*; there is so little in them, that I shall say no more, than that it is as lawful to turn the Psalms, or other fit matter for spiritual Songs, into Metre, in order to be sung, as it is to translate the Scriptures into
English

English Prose to be read; and being Ser. IV.
the aptest method to fit them for singing, there is no doubt to be made of the Lawfulness of it. As to the Use of our Tunes, they being compos'd in such Numbers as do very well sute the Gravity of the Matter to be sung, I see not any thing that hath any force against it. More need not be said to this Objection.

As to the two last Querys, *Whether Antiphonal Singing, and Singing with musical Instruments be lawful?* I leave them to defend their own Cause, who are for this way of celebrating the Praises of God. We reckon our selves no farther concern'd in this Controversy, than vindicating our way, as it is us'd in our Congregations; and therefore I dismifs that part of it which concerns *Cathedral Worship*, See Disc. and singing with *Organs*, to those of *Cathed.* who being better satisfy'd with *Worship.* that Practice, may be better able to defend it.

There remains only one thing we are concern'd to plead for, and this is a Practice which hath lately

Ser. IV. lately obtain'd in some of our
~ ~ ~ Congregations ; and that is *singing
of Psalms without reading.*

This has been matter of Scruple to some People. To remove an old Custom, tho a bad one, is like removing the antient Landmarks. But if People did duly inquire into the first Reason of this Custom, they who are such Sticklers for it (if I am not mistaken) would not express such a Zeal for its continuance. This Practice was at first owing to the Ignorance of People, who living under the Darknes of Popery, vast multitudes of them could not read. For this reason our first *Reformers* thought it much better to practise this way of singing Psalms, by the Clerk's reading Line after Line, than that such great numbers (as then were) should be depriv'd of the Benefit of this Ordinance. But blessed be God, it is now a long time since we came out of Popery : And there are but few among us but can read, or who (if they would be at the pains) might soon
attain

attain it. And therefore I think Ser. IV. 'tis high time to reform from a Custom, which the People's Ignorance did at first necessitate them to, and which all who will use their Understanding must acknowledge does labour with many Inconveniences and Defects.

For the way of Singing by Reading does in the *first* place cause a very great *interruption* in the Musick; and thereby retrenching from the Sweetness and Harmony of the Action, makes the Exercise abundantly more flat and dull than otherwise: This every one's Experience must inform them.


Again, it is a very great hindrance to the *understanding* of what we sing. For the reading of the Line does frequently break the Sense, and till that be given whole and intire, we know not what we sing, but are left to uncertain Conjectures; and before the whole Sense be read out, we have frequently forgotten what we first sang. And as thus the Musick and Sense of the Psalm is and must oftentimes be interrupted, so likewise

Ser. IV. wise must it be a great check upon
 ~~~~~ our *Affections*, and a hindrance to  
 the Exercise of our *Graces* in this  
 Duty.

As these are manifest Inconveniences, so all these are effectually provided against by that custom of Singing which some of us have brought into our Churches, *viz.* of singing with *Books* in our hands. For by this means every one sees the whole Sense intire before him, and is thereby capable of singing with Understanding; which in the other case, when People have no Books, it must be difficult to do. And understanding what we sing, having the Sense whole and intire under our eye, our Affections are more easily excited, and assisted to *make melody to God in our Hearts*.

Besides, By this uninterrupted way of Singing there is a greater Harmony and Life in the Musick, and consequently a greater tendency therein to raise and exhilarate the Spirits.


Again, By every one's having a Book in his hand there is this Convenience,

veniency, that it keeps us more Ser. IV.  
intent and close to the business   
before us, and prevents that wand-  
ring of the Eye, and careless ga-  
zing, which is too often observ'd  
in the other way. And indeed  
this is a Duty which requires so  
much Spirituality, and so close  
an Application of the Heart, that  
we should be glad of any thing  
that might be a means to prevent  
our Distractions. 'Tis true, Per-  
sons may gaze about, even tho  
they have this means to prevent  
it; but yet they cannot do it so  
*much*, nor so *easily*, unless they  
wholly neglect joining in this Duty  
with the rest of the Assembly.

I shall mention one considerable  
Advantage more in the last place,  
and this is, that it will be a great  
means of *fixing* what we sing in  
our Memorys. Weighty Matters  
deliver'd in Metre are sooner  
learn'd, and more easily retain'd.  
And the frequent singing of them  
with Books, will in time render  
them so familiar, as we may be  
able to sing without them. We  
have a notable Proof of this in the

*French*



Ser. IV. *French and Dutch Churches*, where  
 I have often seen Persons who had no Books join as readily in singing as those that had them. By frequent reading of the Psalms, they have so transcrib'd them into their Memorys, as at last to lay aside their Books. And O how excellent a Treasure would it be, to have a good number of divine and spiritual Songs repositied in our Memorys, ready to produce and use upon any occasion! that when we are by our selves, or with others, we can presently raise up our Hearts, and sing a Psalm and Hymn to the Lord.

Now after what has been said I may leave it to the Impartial and Unprejudic'd to judg which is the most eligible way of Singing, and most adapted to answer the Design of the Ordinance, the other Practice, or that which is here recommended.

I know but one Objection, that is of any consideration, to be alledg'd against it: And it is, that this Custom must necessarily debar those from the Benefit of this  
 O:di-

Ordinance, who cannot read. Ser. IV.

But *first*, these are but *few*, especially in *London*, and other *Cities* and *Towns*, where there are abundant Opportunities, and ordinarily care taken to instruct the Poor to read. And of these the far greatest part in a very short time might learn to read, if they would but apply themselves to it. It is generally People's Sin they cannot read, and why should others suffer for their Sin?

Again, If for the sake of two or three in a Congregation we ought to omit a Custom so beneficial to the *Generality*, and so *necessary* to the *right Performance* of this Duty: For the same reason we ought *wholly to omit* Singing, for the benefit of a *greater number*, who for want of a Voice *cannot* sing with the Congregation; but who may say, it would be much more profitable to them, if the Psalm were *gravely and slowly read*, than if it were sung.

But lastly, where the Number of such illiterate Persons is considerable, as in some remote, obscure,

Ser. IV. *scure*, and Country Villages, it may not be amiss to continue the other way; but so as that now and then, for the sake of others who can read, our Method be observ'd. And in the mean time it were to be wish'd, that such as are charitably dispos'd would order some part of their Benevolence towards the erecting of Schools in such dark places, and procure that the Poor be taught to read. Herein they would doubtless do a Work highly acceptable in the sight of God.

As to other Objections, that may be rais'd against what we have recommended; a Pair of *Spectacles* would answer for the *most part* those of the Aged; for I am satisfy'd but very few attend our Assemblies, who have outliv'd the Use of these Helps: And a small Sum of Money rais'd in the Congregation to buy a competent number of Books to be given away, will answer the Objections of the *Poor*.

But if after all this, People will cavil and be contentious, we must  
pity

pity their Weakness, and bless Ser. IV.  
God who hath shone upon us with  
so great Light, as to remove our  
*most dangerous* Prejudices against the  
*pure Administrations* of his Wor-  
ship, when we see how difficult it  
is in lesser matters to wean Peo-  
ple from a Custom they have been  
long wedded to.

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H DIREC-

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**DIRECTIONS** *for the*  
*Duty of* **SINGING.**

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**SERMON V.**

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**EPHES. V.** *latter Part of*  
*the 19th Verse.*

—— *Singing and making melody*  
*in your Heart to the Lord.*

**T**HESE Words contain an Exhortation to the Practice of that noble and delightful Duty, of *Singing* the Praises of God ; and afford us some Advice and Direction for the right Performance of it. We must be inspir'd and acted, not by a *vain* and *sensual Spirit*, but by the *divine* ; and being thus prepar'd, must



must so sing, as to *make melody in* Ser. 'V.  
*our Hearts to the Lord.*

Here are several Words in this Verse relating to the Nature of this Duty, which I shall not stay to explain and open: This having been already done to my hand, I shall no further consider the Text, than it is serviceable to me in handling that part of the Subject, which is assign'd me in this Exercise; and that is to lay before you *some Practical Rules and Directions for the acceptable Performance of the Duty.* The Nature of it has been open'd, your Obligation as Christians to perform it fully prov'd, the Divine Excellency and Nobleness of it clearly manifested, the Cavils and Objections of those who are Enemys to it fully consider'd and answer'd; and now, I hope, what you have heard has so far convinc'd your Judgment, and influenc'd your Wills and Affections, that you are resolv'd either, to *begin or continue in the Practice* of so unquestionable and excellent a Duty, and that you are very desirous to know how you may per-

Ser. V. form it to God's acceptance, and  
 ~~~~~ the advantage of your own Souls.

This *Part of the Subject* is as necessary as any, for you to be instructed in; for after all that has been said, if you fail in the right manner of Performance, your labour will be lost: How excellent a Duty soever it be in it self, and how beneficial and pleasant soever it be to others, it will not be so to you; but God will be dishonour'd, and your Souls prejudic'd. I fear multitudes are very defective and faulty in this part of the Duty: There are many more who are Enemies to a *holy Performance*, than who are Enemies to the *external Duty*.

I shall divide the Directions into three parts,

- I. *Such as concern the Choice of proper and futable Matter.*
- II. *Such as relate to the external Manner of Performance. And,*
- III. *Such as respect the internal and spiritual Frame and Temper of the Soul.*

I. 'Tis necessary something should be said on the first Head, because in the Choice of a Psalm, the *Metre* into which it is translated, and the Tune to which it is set, is too often more regarded, than the subject *Matter* of it, and its *Suitableness* to the present occasion.

§. 1. *We should ordinarily chuse such Matter as is best suited to the Spirituality of the Gospel-Dispensation we live under.* As now, for instance, such parts of *David's Psalms* should generally be sung, as give us the most great and worthy, the most sweet and endearing Apprehensions of the blessed and glorious God, and which tend to enkindle and stir up in us spiritual Affections, suitable to those Apprehensions.

Such Psalms as contain Matter of Prayer for divine and spiritual Blessings, and of Praise for the Reception of them. *Such* which hold forth precious Promises of the same nature, for our Faith and Hope to build upon. *Such* as

Ser. V. have the most immediate reference
 ~~~~~ to our Lord Jesus Christ, the *then*  
 ~~~~~ promis'd Messiah; which foretel  
 what he was to do and suffer at
 his Incarnation, the Blessings he
 was to procure, and the spiri-
 tual Glory and Privileges of that
 Gospel-Church he was to erect in
 the World.

There are many such Psalms,
 which the Christian Church can
 better understand now, than the
 Jewish Church could, when they
 were first pen'd, or, it may be,
 than the Penmen did themselves.
 Tho many of these Psalms seem
 dark and obscure, if we only re-
 gard the manner of Expression,
 yet we may be sure they were
 Prophecys of Christ, and of the
 State and Privileges of the Chris-
 tian Church, if we take the Wri-
 ters of the *New Testament* to be
 infallible Interpreters of the Pro-
 phecys of the *Old*. We can see further
 into the mysterious and spiritual
 Sense of these Passages, and so are
 capable of singing them with a much
 more Evangelical Spirit, than the
 Old Testament Believers could do.

I am far from thinking it unlaw- Ser. V.


ful or unprofitable to sing such Psalms as wholly relate to the *Jewish* Church, they may as lawfully and profitably be sung as read; but surely it is best becoming and most agreeable to Christians to be much taken up in *Vocal* Praising of God and the Redeemer, for the rich Discoverys of Love and Grace to Sinners. We make but an ill Improvement of our brighter Gospel-Light and Grace, if we are not more spiritual in our Prayers and Praises than the *Jews* were. The Doctrine of the Trinity, the Incarnation of the Son of God, his expiatory Death and Sacrifice, his Resurrection, Ascension and glorious Exaltation, his Intercession for Sinners, their Justification by his Righteousness, and Sanctification by his Spirit; and in a word, the whole Doctrine of Christ's Mediation, with all those admirable Perfections of God that shine forth therein, are things that were but little known under the *Old Dispensation*; but they shine with a far

Ser. V. greater Brightness and Lustre under the *New*. Now as Believers, in those days, were most taken up in celebrating those *Dispensations* of God's Providence, that were then most *remarkable*; so should Christians be in celebrating the *Work of Redemption*, this being the most glorious Discovery of the Divine Perfections which God *has* given, or *can* give to *this* World.

I am far from confining our Praises and Thanksgivings to this Duty of Singing. These should mix themselves with all our Prayers and
 Phil. IV. 6. Supplications: *In every thing by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving, let your Requests be made known unto God.* But since the Singing and Chanting forth God's Praises has an *Advantage* above the bare Rehearsal of them in Prose; since this tends most to quicken and enlarge the Heart, and creates most spiritual Pleasure in the Soul; we should, in this way, offer to God those Praises and Thanksgivings which have the Mysterys and Blessings of our Redemption for the Subject-matter of them.

Upon

Upon this occasion I cannot Ser. V.
 but heartily wish, that many Parts of the *New Testament* were translated into Metre, and so fitted to be sung in Christian Churches and Families, and that the Practice did more generally obtain among us: Not to the Exclusion of *David's Psalms*, but only as a Supplement and Addition, because they don't so fully suite the State of the Gospel-Church, as they did the *Jewish*. This Part of our Christian Worship would be much more compleat and perfect, if those *Doxologys* and *Benedictions* were thus translated, that we meet with in *St. Paul's Epistles*, and other Parts of the *New Testament*. We read *That the four Beasts and the four and twenty Elders did praise Christ by singing a new Song, saying, Thou art worthy, &c.* Many *Expositors*, by these *Elders*, understand (not improbably) the Members of the *Christian Church* upon *Earth*; and then the words are an intimation, that in Christian Assemblys Christ is to be prais'd with *New Songs*, fitted to the Work of Redemption,


Ser. V. and the Glory he is advanc'd to,  and not merely with the *Psalms of David*. If you desire further Satisfaction, I refer you to Mr. *Watts's* ingenious Essay on this Subject, which I have seen since the Composition of this Discourse.

§. 2. Upon publick special Occasions we ought to have regard to those Providences of God that his Church and People are then under. As we are a part of Christ's Church, so we ought to be affected with the State thereof. When God's People lie under or are in danger of any general Calamity, and we are call'd to publick Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer, such *Psalms* should be chosen, as bring to our remembrance the Circumstances of God's Church in former days. His wonderful Appearances for them, when their Strength and Hope was almost quite gone, the Methods they took in their Distress, and the Success of them, and what Returns they made to God for their Deliverances; the meditating upon, and singing forth such Passages, have an Aptitude and Tendency

dency to beget in us awful Apprehensions of the Majesty and Power, Justice and Holiness of God; and they will greatly help to quicken and strengthen our Faith and Hope in his Grace and Goodness, since he is the same God *yesterday, to day, and for ever*, and has the same Love and Compassion for his People as ever.


Again, *such Psalms* are proper as are of a Penitential Nature, which contain *Confessions* of Sin, *Deprecations* of deserv'd Judgments, *Supplications* for undeserv'd Mercys; which are futable to beget and stir up Self-abhorrence, Shame and Sorrow for, Hatred and Detestation of Sin.

And then on days of publick Praise and Thanksgiving, such Psalms should be chosen, as do set forth and magnify those Perfections of God, which were most conspicuous in the Mercys we commemorate, and which are the most apt to excite those Graces that should be exercis'd in the most lively manner on those days, and such as will be best expressive of our Resolution, to
trust

Ser. V. trust and confide in God for the
 future. I forbear mentioning particular Psalms, that having been largely done in some of the foregoing Discourses. A *Christian*, who is conversant in *David's Psalms*, will find there are few Providences God's Church can be under, but there is something in them very futable and applicable ; and a wise Choice would be very serviceable to bring the Minds of Christians into, and to keep them in a good Frame, throughout the Dutys of such Days.

§. 3. *In our Choice some regard should be had to the other Parts of Worship this Duty is conjoin'd with. We must so endeavour to perform every Duty, that one may be a Preparatory to another, and that the subsequent Duty may further cherish and strengthen those holy Impressions and Affections in us which the foregoing began : that tho we pass from one Duty to another, yet that which is the main end and design of all Dutys, viz. the glorifying of God, and the working up our Souls to a Divine and*
Godlike

Godlike Temper, may still be car-Ser. V.
rying on more and more. *When* ~~~~~
Singing preccdes Prayer, something
should be sung that may best com-
pose the Mind to a becoming Re-
verence for that Duty; and when
it follows *Preaching*, something
should be chosen that may be pro-
per to second and further press
home the Truths we have heard.
When there is this *blessed Harmony*
between one Duty and another,
we shall perform them with the
greatest Pleasure and Profit. I
dare appeal to the Experience of
serious Christians, whether they
have not found the singing *the self-*
same Psalm much more sweet and
reviving to their Spirits *at one*
time, when this Direction has
been observ'd, than *at another*,
when no regard has been had to
it. *Again, on Sacrament-days*, when
we have been commemorating the
matchless Love of our dear Re-
deemer, at the close of that Or-
dinance something should be sung
that may keep alive, and further
excite those Graces we have been
in the Exercise of, and that may
send

Ser. V. send us away full of Admiration,
 Joy and Thankfulness.

§. 4. *Christians in their private Familys should have regard to their Family-State and Circumstances, and those particular Providences of God they are under, especially when they are peculiar and remarkable, either in a way of Judgment or Mercy. A suitable Choice at such times will improve the Seriousness of our Frame, and make the Dispensations more affecting and impressive. But care must be taken that our Joy or Sorrow don't degenerate into sinful Extremes, that under the Notion of Duty we do not cherish such a Temper of Soul as is really dishonourable to God, and injurious to our selves, and which ought to be striven against.*

§. 5. *Lastly, Private Christians may regard the particular State and present Frame of their own Souls. Tho it be unquestionably lawful to sing such Psalms as don't exactly suite our own Circumstances, either outward or inward, because they are profitable for Instruction and*
Admo-

Admonition; yet we shall be most Ser. V. affected when what we sing is fitted to our Condition, and is expressive of the inward Sense and Language of our Hearts. Those sing with the most Pleasure, that sing *David's Psalms with David's Spirit*. In short, Christians should consider what special Graces they have more than ordinary need to have exercis'd and increas'd, what Corruptions to be mortify'd and kept under, what Difficultys, and Temptations, and Afflictions they are call'd to contend and grapple with. Such things as these must direct them both in the matter of their *Prayers* and *Singing*, when the choice is left to themselves. So much for the *first General Head*. I now proceed in the second Place,

II. *To such Directions as relate to the external manner of Performance*. I don't pretend to instruct you in the Art of Singing, 'tis not my proper Business was I capable of it; I shall only mention a few things that Reason and the Nature of the Duty plainly suggest.

§. I.

Ser. V.


§. 1. *Some Regard ought to be had to external Harmony, that there be Melody made with our Voices as well as Hearts. If no care be taken about the Tune and Metre, there will be nothing but Discord and Confusion; such Singing will be a great Hindrance, and not a Help to Devotion. We are Sensitive as well as Rational Creatures, compounded of Body and Soul; and while we are in this state of Union, our Senses have great Influence upon our higher Powers. Sensitive Pleasure is lawful and laudable, while it is desir'd in subordination and subserviency to that which is more refin'd and rational, and not principally for it self. Without the one it is scarce possible, in our present State, to enjoy the other, for God works upon his Creatures in a way suitable to their Nature. The innocent Pleasures of the Ear, by melodious Sounds, has experimentally been found a mighty help to excite and raise devout Affections in the Soul: Nature (as one expresses it) in this case helps Grace.*

But

But here our great Care must be, Ser. V.
that we don't take up with the *Means* for the *End*, and mistake the pleasing of our sensitive Affections and Imaginations for that spiritual Pleasure which holy Souls take in God and Things of a Divine Nature. Whenever it is thus, the fault is in the evil Frame and Temper of our Hearts, and does not arise from the Nature of the thing; for holy Souls can and will improve it for holy Ends and Purposes. And indeed unless Singing be so order'd, as in some measure to be grateful to the Ear, the Ordinance will be expos'd to Contempt, and not serve the Ends of Devotion. *God is the God of Order, and not of Confusion.* I would not be thought to discourage those from this Duty who have little or no artificial Skill; many can sing in conjunction with others, tho they can't *lead* a Tune: and they that have not so much Skill as this, may so manage their Voices, as not to disturb those that have, and by joining with them may be greatly affected and edify'd, much more

Ser. V. more perhaps than those that have
 ~~~~~ ten times their Skill, but want  
 their pious Dispositions of Soul.  
 Tho still I am of Opinion, that if  
 such Christians have a natural Ca-  
 pacity for it, some *artificial Skill*  
 would be very serviceable to them,  
 in the more spiritual Perfor-  
 mance of the Duty: provided they  
 are not so taken up with minding  
 the Tune, as to be taken off from  
 observing the Matter sung, and  
 the Frame of Heart with which  
 they sing.

§. 2. *Care must be taken that the  
 Tunes sung, and the Manner of Sing-  
 ing be only such as have a Tendency  
 to excite divine and spiritual Affec-  
 tions.* Psalm-Tunes ought to be  
 solemn, and grave, not vain, and  
 light, and airy, as if they were  
 only adapted to please and gratify  
 a wanton and sensual Mind: This  
 would be to turn one of the most  
 noble and spiritual Dutys of Reli-  
 gion into a mere *Entertainment* for  
 the Senses and Fancys of carnal  
 Men; this would be to turn God's  
 House into a *Theatre*, and would  
 in a manner *desecrate* God's *sacred*  
 Worship,

Worship, and make it distastful to Ser. V.  
 pious Minds. The Power of *Vocal*   
 as well as *Instrumental Musick* is  
 very great, and may be abus'd to  
 bad Purposes as well as improv'd  
 to holy ones; and therefore only  
 such Tunes must be us'd in God's  
 House, as becomes his Majesty and  
 Holiness, and the Gravity and  
 Spirituality of the Worship we  
 are engag'd in. *Neither* must the  
 Voice be so modulated, as should  
 render what is sung unintelligible  
 to the greatest part of the Wor-  
 shippers; for this would be, as to  
 the Ends of *Edification*, the same  
 thing as if Persons sung in an  
 unknown Tongue.

§. 3. *In the choice of the Tune,*  
 some regard should be had to the  
 Matter sung; that it may have an  
 Aptitude to excite in us those Di-  
 vine Graces, which the Matter of  
 the Psalm requires and calls for.  
 Nothing is more certain than that  
 different Tunes have a different  
 Influence and Efficacy upon the  
 Minds of Men: Those that have  
 a Tendency to raise our Joy and  
 Thankfulness, are Enemies to Sor-  
 row

Ser. V. row and Sadness of Spirit; and those that befriend this Temper, are prejudicial to the other. It would be very preposterous, and a great Incongruity, if the *Tendency* of the Tune should promote Sorrow and Grief, when the *Design* of the Psalm is to raise in us a joyful thankful Admiration of God's Grace and Goodness.

§. 4. *Such Tunes should be ordinarily sung, as the Generality of the Worshippers can join in; because Singing is a Duty incumbent upon all Christians that have any capacity for it, and is a stated Part of God's publick Worship: and therefore it is not rightly perform'd when it is so manag'd as to shut out the greatest part of the Assembly from having any share in it. I may add,*

§. 5. *That it is most eligible, that Persons, engag'd in this Ordinance of Singing, should have Psalm-Books, that so the Duty might be perform'd without the usual Interruption of reading Line by Line. By this means the Sense of what is sung will at once lie open to their View,*

*View, and be better understood by Ser. V. them; and there will be a more intire and continu'd Harmony, and the Affections will not be in so much danger of cooling and flatting by the frequent Pauses that are made by reading. These things are but barely mention'd, having been more distinctly treated of before. But yet I subjoin, that the Inconveniency of Reading is such as may be lawfully dispens'd with, where it cannot be remedy'd without a greater; i. e. when without this Help the greatest part of an Assembly would be debar'd from joining in the Ordinance. Need I add,*

§. 6. *And lastly, That in the Performance of this Duty there must be all the external and visible Signs of Reverence and Devotion. Where these are wanting, we may, without breach of Charity, conclude, that there is not much inward Seriousness and Affection. Tho bodily Exercise alone profits little, yet God must be glorify'd with our Bodys as well as our Souls; they are the Workmanship of God, and the*  
Pur-

Ser. V. *Purchase of Christ, and the Temple of the Holy Ghost : The Lord is for the Body, and therefore the Body ought to be for the Lord.* In this Duty the Head must be uncover'd, the Countenance compos'd and serious, the Eye fixt, not roving and wandring; and, in a word, the whole external Behaviour such as, in the judgment of Charity, bespeaks an engag'd and devout Mind and Heart, and as becomes the Perfections of the God we worship. And whether that Posture in Singing, which generally obtains among us, be so proper for Psalms of direct *Prayer and Praise*, I leave to your own serious deliberate Consideration. I now proceed,


III. *To such Directions as respect the internal and spiritual Frame and Temper of the Soul.* Tho you are ever so careful in observing and following what I have hitherto said, yet unless a special regard be had to the State and Frame of the Soul, all will avail nothing as to your Acceptance with God. Some  
of



of these Directions are such as Ser. V. concern this Duty in common with others, and therefore I need not much enlarge.

§. 1. *The habitual Temper and Disposition must be such as is pleasing unto God.* You must be in a converted, pardon'd, reconcil'd State. Till you have Grace in the Heart, and are fill'd with the Spirit, you are not qualify'd for the acceptable Performance of this Duty. The Exercise of Grace necessarily supposes the internal vital Principle; for Persons can never exercise that which they have not. Carnal and un sanctify'd Men do but debase and pollute every Duty they take in hand: Their State is unacceptable; the Principles from which, and the Ends for which they act, are not divine and supernatural, but low, base and mercenary; and consequently nothing that they do is properly pleasing unto God. *The carnal Mind is Enmity against Rom. VIII. God; it is not subject to the Law of 7, 8. God, nor indeed can be: So then, they that are in the Flesh, cannot please God. We are only accepted Eph. I. 6. in*

Ser. V. *in the Beloved*, to whom they have  
 ~~~~~ no vital Union, nor stand in any  
 Gen. IV. 4. federal Relation. The *Lord had*
first Respect to Abel, and then to his
Offering. If the *Person* be not ac-
 cepted, the *Sacrifice* will not. I
 own all the Actions of Men in a
 justify'd State are not acceptable
 to God, for they do not always
 exert the good Principles that are
 within them, and act becoming
 their Relation and Character; and
 Mat. VII. yet till the *Tree be made good*, the
 17, 18. *Fruit can never be truly so*. Wic-
 ked Men may have pleasant and
 melodious Voices, and may be well
 skill'd in the *Art* of Singing, and
 so may be instrumental in raising
 the Affections of pious Christians;
 but not being animated by a Di-
 vine Spirit, they are but like so
 many *dead and lifeless Organs*: for
 want of that which ought to be
 in them, they lose not only the
 spiritual benefit of the Duty, but
 are obnoxious to Punishment for
 their Hypocrisy and Dissimula-
 tion, for making only an external
 shew of that which they really
 have not. I design not by this
 Discourse

Discourse to take unconverted Men Ser. V. & wholly off from this Duty: for  the same Objections that lie against their *Singing of Psalms* for want of habitual Grace, lie against their *Praying*, and *Hearing*, and any other Duty; for no Duty can rightly be perform'd without the Grace of God. I would only convince them of the Misery and Unhappiness of their present Condition, that they may not contentedly continue in it: Their moral Incapacity for Duty takes not away their Obligation to Performance, but is their Sin; and the greater it is, the more deprav'd it speaks them to be. However, if they do their best, with those Influences of common Grace that are afforded, and do honestly desire and endeavour to do better, they are much *less guilty* than they would be by a *total Omission*.

§. 2. *You must sing with Attention and Understanding.* This was the the Apostle's Resolution: *I will* 1 Cor. *sing with Understanding.* *Sing ye* XIV. 14. *Praises with Understanding.* It's PLXLVII. impossible that blind Devotion⁷:
I should

Ser. V. should ever be pleasing unto God.

Tho there may be *Light* in the *Head*, when there is no *Heat* and *Warmth* in the *Heart*, yet we can never be rationally and piously affected with what we understand not; such Devotion can be no better than superstitious Frenzy and Enthusiasm. Our great Care then must be, that we are not so taken up in our Thoughts about the Tune we sing, and the Sound and Cadency of the Words, as not to mind the Excellency, Weight and Importance of the Matter sung. This is a common fault, that ought diligently to be guarded against. I fear Mens Thoughts are often imploy'd in observing how they themselves and others sing, when they should attend to and be intent upon the spiritual and useful Nature of what they sing: Persons can never receive Instruction or Consolation by such kind of Singing. See then, that while your *Tongues* are imploy'd in chanting forth the words, your *Mind* and *Thoughts* be as busily imploy'd in diving into, and

in sweet Meditation upon the spiritual Sense and Meaning of them. *Ser. V.*
Unless you have slothful and un-
ingag'd Minds, you will find the
Duty of Singing a greater help
this way, than barely the reading
of the words would be, there be-
ing a longer time for the exercise
of Thought in the *one* than in the
other.

§. 3. *Yea, there must be melody in the Heart as well as the Voice:* This particularly is the Apostle's Direction in my Text. If you ask what this denotes, I answer in two or three things.

(1.) That *the Heart and spiritual Affections be ingag'd in the Duty, as well as the Mind and Voice.* It is very possible the *Mind* may be imploy'd, and yet there may be no devout stirring of the *Affections*. It is one thing to know, and mind what is said and sung, and another to be deeply and seriously affected with it. When this Duty is acceptably perform'd, there is a happy conjunction of all these; *Grace in the Heart* will exert and put forth it self. The

Ser. V. Apostle, in his Epistle to the *Colossians*, explains what he means
 Col. III. here by *making melody in our Hearts*,
 16. by telling us we must *sing with Grace in our Hearts*. Renewing Grace is very diffusive, it reaches to all the Powers and Facultys of the Soul; we must be *sanctify'd wholly in Soul, Spirit, and Body*. But yet the Heart is the principal Seat and Subject of Divine Grace; this is what God chiefly looks at, and calls for: *My Son, give me thy Heart*. We must *sanctify the Lord God in our Hearts, make him our Fear and our Dread*. Those *Notions* of God, how sublime soever, which do not distil upon and influence the Heart; and those external *Actions*, which do not flow from a Heart set right with, and duly affected towards God, are of no account with him. And as Grace has its Throne and Residence in the Heart, so it must rule and govern there in a lively and vigorous manner; it must fix and ingage, warm and inflame the Heart. Our Hearts must burn within us; for no external Dutys
 of

of Religion are pleasing to God, Ser. V. unless we are in the exercise of Grace in the performance of them.

(2.) *This Melody denotes the variety of Divine Graces that ought to be exercis'd in this Duty.* One Note makes no Melody. This is a Duty wherein the several Graces of the Spirit may and should be exercis'd; such as *Faith and Love, Desire and Hope, Humility, Joy and Delight.* And indeed I know no one particular Grace, but what there may be occasion for in this Duty one time or other.

(3.) *It denotes the suitable Exercise of Grace.* Every Grace should be drawn forth in its due and proper Order, according as the Matter sung shall require. The Exercise of one Grace must not exclude the Exercise of another. As in *vocal Musick*, every Note must be sung in its proper Place and Order, and there must be a skilful mixture of them, or there will be no *external Melody*; so there must be a sweet mixture of every Grace, and a seasonable act-

Ser. V. ing of them upon God, or else
 there will be no *Melody in the Heart*. It is a great part of holy Christian Wisdom, to know how to live in the futable Exercise of Grace, and not to be acting one Grace, when God by his Word or Providence calls for another. It is a great fault in some serious Christians, that they too much indulge themselves in Fear, Sorrow, Grief, &c. whilst they neglect or seldom stir up the nobler Graces of Faith, Love, and Hope, and Delight in God; tho' these latter may be more futable and congruous to their present Circumstances, and the Dutys they are engag'd in. There is no true *Melody in the Heart*, when Persons are so defective and preposterous in the Exercise of Grace. We must take care then, that every *Psalm we sing* do stir up those Graces, which in the Design of God, and the Nature of the Thing, it has an Aptitude and Tendency to do.

When there is an Assembly of such Hearts, thus tun'd and imploy'd

ploy'd in singing the Praises of Ser. V. God, they make *Melody to the Lord*: This is much more grateful to God, than the exactest and sweetest *Melody* of Voice can be to us. It's a real Pleasure to the Blessed God to see such a Union and Conjunction of Hearts, all animated by one and the same Spirit, breathing forth the same Desires, paying the same Divine Worship and Adoration, all swallow'd up in the Contemplation and Admiration of his infinite Excellencys and Perfections. If our *praising Assemblys* were but made up of such Worshipers, they would be a true Emblem of the *Heavenly Choir* and Society above: but it is greatly to be fear'd, that in most of them, there is much less *Melody in the Hearts* of Men than in their *Voices*; many who have harmonious Voices, have Hearts that will not stir nor move within them. Let every one of you look to your own Hearts, that this Melody be not wanting there; and then you shall be accepted of God, tho you sing in Society with

Ser. V. those who are Strangers to it.

Now that you may be always ready thus to sing, I'll just subjoin a few words of Advice.

You must labour to be of an humble, thankful Temper of Soul, and make Praise and Thanksgiving your constant Employment; this should have a more considerable share in your daily Devotions than ordinarily it has. Take heed of a querelous, murmuring, complaining Spirit; for this greatly indisposes the Soul for the Work of Praise. Endeavour to live from day to day in a sense of God's Love to you, and in the exercise of Love, Joy, and Delight towards him. Just before your Entrance upon this Duty, your Thoughts should be taken up in meditating upon God's Excellencys and Perfections, your own Meanness and Unworthiness, his Goodness to you above multitudes of your Fellow-Creatures, your many Mercys and Privileges, notwithstanding your Demerits and manifold Forfeitures of them. Think upon God's astonishing Love to Sinners in Christ,
and

and the blessed Fruits and Effects Ser. V. of it. *Think* on the Joys of Heaven, and the noble Employment of Saints and Angels there; how they tune their Hearts, and with how strong a Breath they sound forth the Praises of God, and of the Lamb. *Think* of the Torments of the Damn'd, and how happy they would reckon themselves if they were call'd to your Work; and how justly you might have been in their State and Place, who instead of praising God, are *weeping, and wailing, and gnashing their Teeth.* Such *Meditations* as these would be very serviceable towards the putting you in a suitable Frame for, and assisting you in the Performance of this Duty.

§.4. *There must be a humble dependance upon the Spirit of Christ, for his assisting, quickening Influences.* Without these, tho the Principles of Grace are implanted in the Heart, they will not exert and put forth themselves. Believers themselves without Christ can do nothing: 'Tis thro Christ's strengthening us, that we are enabled to do all things: Joh. XV. 5

I 5 things:

Ser. V. *things: He works all our Works in us, and for us. We must go forth in his Strength, and make mention of his Name, and of his only. As without God's general Concourse, as the God of Nature, we can't perform natural Actions; so without his Influence, as the God of Grace, we can't perform spiritual ones. The best of Christians have need to put up the Prayer of the*

Cant. IV. *Spouse: Awake, O North Wind, and come thou South, blow upon my Garden, that the Spices thereof may flow out; then let my Beloved come into his Garden, and eat his pleasant Fruits. The giving or withholding of the Spirit's Influences is one great cause of the remarkable difference that there is betwixt one Christian and another, and betwixt the same Christian, at different times, in the Performance of religious Dutys. In this way God does signally either reward the Diligence, humble Dependance, and Expectation of his People; or punish their Carelessness and Sloth, their Pride and Self-Confidence.*

Rom. VIII. *Tho the Spirit of Christ dwells in every*

every sincere Believer, yet there *Ser. V.*
 is a vast *Variety* and *Inequality* as
 to the Measure of his actual Assis-
 tance and Influence; and in pro-
 portion hereto the Hearts of God's
 People will be more or less en-
 larg'd and carry'd out in the Du-
 ty. The Spirit may justly reckon
 himself neglected and slighted,
 when there is not a deep and fe-
 rious sense of our own Insufficien-
 cy, and a humble Dependance up-
 on, and Expectation of Help and
 Assistance from him.

§. 5. *There must be an actual Re-
 liance upon the Merit and Intercession
 of Christ for our Acceptance.* After
 the Injunction of this Duty in Co-
 lossians, 'tis immediately added;
Whatsoever ye do in Word or Deed, do *Ch. III. 16,*
all in the Name of our Lord Jesus; *17.*
giving Thanks to God and the Father
by him. The best Christians bring
 much Guilt and Pollution into the
 Presence of God with them, they
 contract much while they are be-
 fore him; their Graces and Dutys
 are so defective and imperfect,
 that if God should be exact to mark
 Iniquity, they could not stand before
 him:

Ser. V. him: If there was not Forgiveness
 with him, there would be no Incou-
 P^r.CXXX
 3, 4. ragement to fear or worship him.


Ch. VIII.
 3.

Our highest Praises are infinitely beneath the Excellencys and Perfections of the Divine Nature, and unworthy of the Divine Acceptance, consider'd merely as they flow from us. Christ is that Angel spoken of in the Revelations, who stands at God's Altar, and has a golden Censor full of Incense, which he offers, with the Prayers and Praises of all the Saints, upon the golden Altar which is before the Throne. We must be great Strangers to God and our selves, to the just and righteous Demands of his Laws, and the Imperfection of our Dutys, if we are not sensible of the necessity of Christ's Mediation, to recommend our Persons and Services to the Divine Acceptance. And therefore we ought to exert explicite Acts of Faith upon his Satisfaction and Intercession; for we cannot justly expect the Application of his Merits, when there is no Sense of the need of them, nor any actual Reliance upon them.

§. 6. And lastly, *This Duty must* Ser. V.
be perform'd unto the Lord; so run the words of the Text, *Singing and making Melody in your Hearts to the Lord*. It is not material, whether by (Lord) we here understand God the Father, or the Mediator Jesus Christ; since in every Duty Christ is to be ey'd as the *proximate* immediate Object, and God the Father as the *final* ultimate one. There is no Coming to the Father but by Christ; and we come to Christ, that by him we may be brought to God. God in Christ then is the Object to whom this Duty must be perform'd. We must sing in obedience to the *Command* of this Lord, do it as an *Act of Divine Worship*, which is due to him, and him only; with a *Design* to magnify and advance his Honour and Glory, by thus proclaiming his Perfections, our Esteem and Affection for them, and Trust and Confidence in them. We must in this way *recommend* him as an Object worthy of the Homage and Worship of the whole World. *These, together with our*
own,

Ser. V. *own, and others spiritual Edification and Comfort, ought to be the Ends we should propose to our selves in the Performance of this Duty : not any low, mercenary, selfish ones of our own, such as worldly Advantage, the Ostentation of our own Art and Skill, the Gratification of the Ears and Fancys of others, that we may be applauded by them. Nay, mere Improvement in the Art of Singing ought not to be our principal Design, tho it may be subordinately look'd at in the Performance of so religious a Duty. This would be not to sing to the Lord, but to our selves ; instead of obtaining his Acceptance, we should certainly provoke his Displeasure, and merit his Rejection and Abhorrence of us and our Sacrifices.*

Thus I have gone thro the *three General Heads* I propos'd ; And now, upon the Whole, you may easily see, whence it is that many *complain*, they find so little *Pleasure* in, and *Benefit* by this Ordinance ; their *Esteem* and *Value* for

for it lessens, and they are tempted to live in the neglect of it. 

There has certainly been some failure in the manner of Performance in some of the foremention'd Respects, which they ought to be sensible of, and humbled for, and charge upon themselves: To this they should attribute their Unprofitableness, and not to any want of Aptitude and Fitness in the Ordinance to do them good. Let but Persons constantly and conscientiously observe the Rules I have laid down, and I am confident they will quickly find this as quickning, and edifying, and comforting a Duty, as most of the Dutys of the Gospel.

And as for those of you that have a Value for this Ordinance, I would have you take care to follow these Directions, as ever you would reap spiritual Advantage your selves, keep up the Credit of it in the World, and promote the Practice of it among others.

But

Ser. V.

But the further enlarging upon,
 and enforcing of these things,
 with *sutable Arguments and Mo-
 tives*, will be the Work of my
 Worthy Brother, who finishes
 what we design from this Subject.

An

*An EXHORTATION to
the Duty of SINGING.*

SERMON VI.

PSAL. LVII. 8.


*Awake up my Glory ; Awake
Psaltery and Harp ; I my self
will awake early.*

YOU have had the several
Parts of this Subject of sing-
ing Psalms in so many Dis-
courses distinctly essay'd, with de-
sign that the whole of it, as a
Duty, might be more compleatly
explain'd and asserted by *Us* ;
while, as a *Gift*, the becoming
manner of performing it is im-
prov'd.

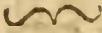
Ser. V. prov'd and cultivated by *You*:

and, I hope, our joint Endeavors may do something toward the settling its Theory and Divine Regulation, its more decent and orderly Practice, the reviving its more general Use, retrieving its Glory, rescuing it from the Objections of the Scrupulous, and from the Corruptions of Levity or Superstition.

To this end the *Nature of the Duty* has been stated, that you may sing with *Understanding*. Its *Obligations* prov'd, that you may sing without the fear of *Will-worship*, or offering *strange Fire*. The *Excellence* of it has been display'd, as truly Angelical and Seraphic; as pleasing to God, and comely for the Upright; as that whereby we are carry'd into the Company of Angels, to join in their Work, and partake of their Joys. *Objections* have been answer'd, that your Hearts may be fix'd while you sing and give Praise. The true manner of singing the Divine Praises has been directed, so as to make *Melody to God*, and that it may be acceptable

ceptable to him, and profitable Ser. VI.
to us. 

What remains then, but that we make the *most* of such a Duty as this? And since here's nothing else to hinder, Indifference, Drowsiness or Carelessness should not; but that we awaken all our Powers to a Work that is so much its own immediate Reward. And since the foregoing Sermons have presented you with the *Scale* of Heavenly Musick, as found in Scripture set by the *Holy Ghost*, who in all this Matter is the *chief Musician*; practise upon it as high as you can: and tho at present the lower Notes only are within your Compass, hereafter the higher Strains shall not be beyond your reach: for when we are made *like Angels*, we shall sing like them too in that World where Love and Harmony are in Perfection: In the mean time, we may bear an humble Part. And why should we think our Heaven can begin too soon? If the Grace of Heaven do but tune the Heart, Wonder, Love and Joy will never let your Tongue lie

Ser. VI. lie still, but will awaken *your Glory,*
 *and all that is within you to bless his*
Holy Name.

The former Part of this Psalm recounts the many Calamitys *David* was under, his Circumstances dark and gloomy as the *Cave* he was now in; distress'd and besieg'd on every side, no way open to Relief but that toward Heaven; he was flying before *Saul's* Cruelty, now instigated by that *evil Spirit*, which in the absence of *David's Harp* and *Psalmody*, had taken intire possession of him. The *Sweet Singer of Israel* was thus drove out to join Consort with the untaught Harmony of the Woods, wandering like a Vagabond; and had nothing fix'd but his Heart, and that he was resolv'd should never be remov'd from God, or from his Praise; for even in such a time as this he could say, *My Heart is fix'd, O God! my Heart is fix'd; I will sing and give Praise. Fix'd* in the midst of Agitations, serene within when all around was Storm and Tempest. And how Divinely Great does that Man look,
 whose

whose inward Harmony no Jar Ser. VI.
and Discord of all his outward Affairs can shatter and destroy ?
Who knows the Secret of fetching down his Consolation from Heaven, and making every thing contribute to his gradual Ascent thither ? *David* in these straits not only quiet, but joyous ! under these Depressions, and yet will not *hang his Harp upon the Willows !* If this be the Fruit of being accustom'd to sing the Divine Praises, may we all be *Psalmists*, may we all say, *Awake up my Glory, &c.*

It will sufficiently answer my purpose to take notice of the Terms he uses, and then to press the Exhortation.

I. *Of the Terms he uses.*

§. 1. *My Glory.*

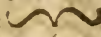
That is, my *Soul* (say some) because the Spirit of a Man is the Glory of a Man, whereby he is dignify'd and rais'd so much beyond the *Brutes*, as to be but a little lower than the *Angels*, nay akin to *God himself, the Father of Spirits.*

My

Ser. VI. My *Musical Skill*, say others, the
 ~~~~~ Glory of the Artist above the Un-  
 skilful ; and that wherein *David*  
 had the Glory of excelling, as *Ju-  
 bal* had of the first Invention. My  
*Tongue*, say others ; this is also the  
 Glory of a Man above dumb Crea-  
 tures, and the Glory of a wise  
 Man above a Fool. And as the  
 Tongue is the Glory of a Man, so  
 the Glory of the Tongue is to glo-  
 rify God. Praise is the Glory of  
 all other Uses to which the Tongue  
 is employ'd. And the Tongue is  
 in the Body *that Temple of the Holy  
 Ghost*, what the silver Trumpet  
 was in the *Temple of Solomon* ; to  
 sound the high Praises of God,  
 and express the rais'd Affections of  
 our Souls.

§. 2. *Awake Psalter and Harp.*

The one for a Psalm, the other  
 for a spiritual Song or Hymn: *q. d.*  
 All my musical Instruments and  
 Skill I will employ in, and conse-  
 crate to the Glory of him, who  
 puts new Songs into my mouth.  
 He first teaches my Fingers to  
 fight, and then to play the *Epini-  
 cion*, or Song of Triumph. Sound  
 then,

then, my Psalter and Harp, emu-Ser. VI.  
lous of those that are about the   
Throne above: Your Melody can  
soften my Cares, lay my Fears,  
and turn my *Cave* into a *Quire*.

As to these Instruments in the  
Worship of God, they were  
doubtless allow'd to *David*, and to  
the Church in his time. They  
were agreeable to the State of  
that Church and People, who were  
led very much by their Senses;  
and whose infant and less discern-  
ing Condition made it needful for  
the Natural Man to have some-  
thing to fasten upon, and be en-  
tertain'd with in the Worship of  
God, and to sweeten and take off  
from the Labour and Burden of  
that Service. But as the Gospel-  
Worship and Appointments are a  
more spiritual, pleasant, and rea-  
sonable Service, and need them less,  
so in the Gospel-Institution we  
find no Footsteps of them; and we  
know who first brought them into  
the Church\*, as well as who first  
brought

---

\* *Pope Vitalianus, about the Year 666.*  
*At Vitalianus Cultui divino intentus, & Re-*  
*gulam*



Ser. VI. brought them into the *World*. It is not my business here to dispute this matter ; and he must at any time do it but forrily, whose Inclination is against him all the while, and whose Genius tempts him to wish himself solidly confuted in all he can advance. But since I find these *Instruments* in my Text, and since the *Sound* of such Texts as these is made use of to turn the publick Worship so frequently into Consorts of Musick ; I shall leave 'em with this Remark : That to let them alone, especially in publick Worship, tho one thought them tolerable, has a much better Grace with it, than to declare them *soresly displeasing to God, and that they filthily defile his holy House and Place of Prayer* †, and

---

gulam Ecclesiasticam composuit, & Cantum ordinavit, adhibitis Consonantium (ut quidam volunt) Organis. *Platina in Vit. Pont.*

† *Homily of the Time and Place of Prayer, 2d Part. The Homily relates that a Woman should say to her Neighbour, at the Time of the Reformation ; Alas, Gossip, what shall we do at Church, since all the Saints are taken*

and yet to bring them into his Ser. VI.  
holy House and Place of Prayer,  
for the use of all promiscuously,  
who will sing in the Assembly,  
whether they think 'em so much as  
tolerable or no.

*§. 3. I my self will awake early.*

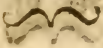
And without this all the rest  
had been an empty Sound: There  
would have been no Melody to the  
Lord, whatsoever good Musick he  
might have made to himself. He  
would not put God off with a Sa-  
crifice of mere Air. He summons  
the Attendance of all his Powers.  
*Himself* is the Offering; and his  
Musick plays to the Sacrifice, as  
it goes up in holy Affections and  
spiritual Joys: and unless these ac-

---

taken away, since all the goodly Sights we  
were wont to have are gone, since we can-  
not hear the *Piping, Singing, Chaunting, and*  
*Playing upon the Organs*, that we could be-  
fore. But, Dearly Beloved, we ought greatly  
to rejoice, and give God thanks, that our  
Churches are deliver'd out of all those things,  
which displeas'd God so sore, and filthily  
deil'd his holy House, and his Place of  
Prayer; for the which he hath justly destroy'd  
many Nations, &c.

K

company

Ser. VI. company the Song, the mere  
 Breath of an Organ, or the Trem-  
 blings of the Strings of an Harp,  
 is as good Devotion, and less of-  
 fensive to God.

II. *To press this Excitation, to  
 which David in these Words  
 awakens and stirs up himself.  
 Consider,*

§. 1. *By the precedent Discourses  
 it's apparent God expects it from you,  
 and insists upon it.*

Where the Precepts are so po-  
 sitive, and the Directions so care-  
 fully laid down, it can never be  
 thought he has left you at liberty.  
 Supposing your Obligation clear  
 to you, a wilful Neglect here is  
 not reconcilable to that Sincerity  
 that has respect to all God's Com-  
 mands. Praise is the proper Tri-  
 bute due to God, the Eternal  
 King; and where it is not paid,  
 we have Instances that God has  
 distrain'd for it upon the best of  
 Men, who indeed do always owe  
 the most. All *Hezekiah's* Good-  
 ness in other respects could not

2 Chron.  
 XXXII.

25.

\*

protect

protect him under the Neglect of Ser. VI. *rendering to God according to the Benefits he had receiv'd.* And to say that this *rendering to the Lord* may be done *other ways*, besides singing his Praises, is true; but does no more satisfy the Authority which has appointed also *this way*, than the doing of some Dutys will atone for the Neglect of others: as if because a Man acknowledg'd God by *Hearing*, he need not do it by *Prayer*, &c.

§. 2. *You cannot answer the Neglect to Gratitude, any more than to Obedience.*

It's fit the Benefactor should chuse his own way of being acknowledg'd; and he has particularly told us, that *he that offereth Praise glorifies him*. The Motives to it are infinite, and the Ingratitude must be monstrous, where the Obligations are so many. Does he not *daily load us with his Benefits*, and *crown the Year with his Loving-kindness*? And his tender Mercys over us, do they not keep pace with, nay, out-number our Pulse and our Moments? Think

Ser. VI. how glorious he is in himself, as  
 ~~~~~ well as how beneficent to us; and  
 Exod. that he places so much of *his Glory*
 XXXIII. in his Goodness to us, and it must
 18, &c. awake *your Glory* in Praises to
 him.

For whom did he raise the noble Architecture of this World, where your Eyes cannot look off from a Miracle? The Earth so situated and furnish'd, as to be *full of the Goodness of God, so is also the great and wide Sea*. But God needed not the Cattel of the thousand Hills of the one, nor the Fish of the other. For whom did he so furnish the Heavens over our heads? He that inhabited Eternity, needed neither Times, nor Seasons: But he knew how much we needed the useful Variation of Summer and Winter, Light and Darkeness.

Can we behold *the Sun, Moon, and Stars*, their artful Order, the exact Periods of their Motion, their Brightness and Influence, and not strike in with *David* upon a like Survey, *How excellent is thy Name, O Lord?* 'Tis thy Glory
 has

has gilded their Beams; thy Skill Ser. VI.
has fix'd their Orbs. Not to give
God the Glory due unto this part
of his Name, looks like a Combination with the Enemy of his Honour to defeat the Design of the whole Creation, which is to *declare the Glory of God*; but *that* it can do only objectively. *Man* is the Priest in this great Temple of the World, whose Tongue must articulate and express what they silently offer; he must collect the Incense they all afford, and lay it upon the Altar. But further,

Need you be put in mind of that nursing *Providenoe*, Provision, and Preservation, that has follow'd you all your days, with as tender and watchful a Care, as if there had been but one Person in the World to look after; and yet at the same time provides for the Millions and Millions that compose the large Family of Heaven and Earth? Feeds *them above* with Light and Love, and fills our Hearts *below* with Food and Gladness. Not forgetting to spread a Table for the Fowls of the Air,

Ser. VI. who light on the ground to gather the providential Meat, then rise and *sing among the Branches*, Psal. CIV. 12. tho it be but for a Dinner upon half a Worm, a Sip of Water, and a poor Lodging in a Bush, are thankful in their way; as the Poet renders that Verse:

Tate. *Where shady Trees, from scorching
Beams,
Yield shelter to the feather'd Throng:
They drink, and to the bounteous
Streams
Return the Tribute of their Song.*

We need but mention the *Grace of Redemption*, to awaken every Christian's *Glory* to the *Song of the Lamb*. For has he snatcht us from weeping and wailing, and shall we not sing? Shall we not break forth into Singing? When Angels lead the way, shall not we who are nearest
Luke II. concern'd repeat, the *Glory to God in the highest for this Good-Will to
Psal. CVII. 2. Men? For his Mercy endureth for ever: Let the Redem'd of the Lord say so.*

Should

Should I go over the Means of Ser. VI. Grace, the Hopes of Glory; the Blessings that spring out of the Earth, and those that come down from Heaven; the Comforts and Directions of his Word; the Refreshment of his Ordinances; the Kingdom a Man enjoys in Peace of Conscience; the Heaven upon Earth foretasted in the Joy of the Holy Ghost; the Triumphs of Soul in the Sense and Evidence of Pardon; the growing Image of God toward Perfection; the Comforts in Death, and Confidence in Judgment: Should I enlarge upon each of these, I should turn my Excitation into a Song; and following the Train of these Motives, should immediately lose my self in Heaven: whose high Hallelujahs must be answer'd from Earth with, *O give thanks unto the Lord! for his Mercy endureth for ever: Let the Redeem'd on the Earth say so, and echo back to the Redeem'd in Heaven:* as two Instruments, tho at a distance, if tun'd alike, will answer each other.

Ser. VI. §. 3. Consider the Nature and
 ~~~~~ Excellence of the Duty, as it has  
 Ser. I. & III been laid before you.

Singing Psalms is a Compound of several other Dutys; it contains Prayer to a very great advantage: The Stretch of the Voice does humour and lead on the earnest reaching of the Mind after the desir'd Blessing. 'Tis the very Element and Breath of Praise; and the *Apostle* tells us, that *Teaching* and *Admonishing* one another is perform'd in singing *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*. For when we sing of *Judgment*, 'tis awakening to Sinners; and when we sing of *Mercy*, it is comforting to all. Meditation can't have a better Help. The solemn Movement of the Time gives room for the Mind to compass the full Sense of the matter, and to impress it deep; and while the Tongue is making the *Pause*, the Heart may make the *Elevation*. In short, it gives an Accent to all Duty; 'tis the Musick of all other Ordinances; 'tis adapted and suited to all Circumstances; as appears from these  
 Psalms

Psalms compos'd upon all Occa-Ser. VI.  
sions and Subjects; Doctrinal, Pro-  
phetical, Hortatory, and Histo-  
rical: of Praise and Prayer; of  
Grief and Joy, in the Penitential  
and Complaining, in the Trium-  
phal and Rejoicing: as if singing  
of Psalms could stand for every  
thing, and like the *Manna* in the  
*Wilderness*, have a Taste of all the  
other Food we enjoy in the House  
of God.


So that tis a Duty that seems  
design'd to reach many Ends at  
once; and fitted to move and raise  
the Mind, to stir and exercise the  
Graces, to excite our Joy, and to  
vent our Grief. It is not only  
calculated for a time of Joy, tho  
that's the Climate under which it  
mostly thrives. There is many a  
weeping Song indited for a time  
of Trouble, and some have found  
this Musick *sweetest* upon the *Wa-*  
*ters*: They have never sung with  
more Melody in the Heart, than  
when 'twas with Tears in the  
Eyes.

It has been already remark'd,  
that *Luther* and his Company us'd



Ser. VI. to sing away their *Fears*, and sing up their *Confidence* in God in the worst of Times; when the prospect of Affairs was threatening and melancholy, and the Company about him dejected by Apprehensions from the Enemys of the Reformation.

Allowance must indeed be made for the Constitutions of some, and the first Shocks of Grief in others, and the different degrees of Grace, and of Strength of Nature: yet it must be acknowledg'd that this Duty has remov'd Grief from some, or in others turn'd it into a better channel; *i. e.* from a *worldly Sorrow that worketh Death*, into a *godly Sorrow that worketh Repentance unto Life*. Has taken off the corrosive Fret of worldly Crosses and Disappointments, and turn'd it into a more genuine and healing Grief: which has enabled Christians to drop those Tears in Joy, that were rais'd by Sorrow; and to vent that agreeable Confusion of Passions, which the Chequer-work of Providence does sometimes throw them into. As when  
Sorrow

Sorrow had fill'd the Hearts of the *Ser. VI.*  
*Disciples* at the parting with their   
*Master*, and yet *Peace* and *Good*  
*Cheer* was the Legacy he left them,  
 this was the Ordinance they chose  
 to close all with. So *Christ*, to  
 fute this Frame, went out singing  
 towards the *Cross*, as some of our  
*Martyrs* have donetowards a *Stake*:  
 So futed is this Duty to all the  
 various Sallys of an holy Soul; it  
 refines and purifies the Passions  
 and Affections it draws forth;  
 that while the Joys of the Wicked  
 are but Sparks of their own kin-  
 dling, or an expiring Blaze, this  
 Joy, like the Fire from Heaven  
 of old, does both kindle the Sa-  
 crifice, and carry it up along  
 with it.

This Duty and this Frame must  
 needs shorten our way to Heaven,  
 and take off the Wearisomness of  
 our Journey: 'tis going to Hea-  
 ven, as one says, *per Compendium*  
*Iineris*, by the shortest Cut. In-  
 deed it's better to go to Heaven  
 any how than not at all; but we  
 may thank our selves for a heavy  
 mournful Passage, when the Righ-  
 teous

Ser. VI. teous are describ'd as going thither singing; *They shall sing in the way of the Lord, for great is the Glory of our God.* Not that these Persons escape their particular Crosses; but by the help of this Practice and Frame they do not sourly and morosely drag their Cross along, as if vex'd that there is any such thing as a Cross in Christ's Religion: but they seem cheerfully to run away with it toward Heaven upon this Consideration, because *great is the Glory of God*; because of the *far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.*

§. 4. I shall press the Exhortation, *from the Honour that God has put upon this Ordinance of singing the Divine Praises.*

The Judgment of God is according to Truth; and 'tis at your peril, that you slight, or neglect, or think meanly of a Duty that God has put such an Honour upon: Honours that seem'd design'd to show, among other ends, how much *he* is concern'd for it, *we* in it, and what we may expect *from* it.

He

He has honour'd it with most Ser. VI.  
*signal Appearances* of himself; he himself descended, and fill'd the Temple with a bright Cloud, as the Singers were praising the Lord, saying, *Praise the Lord, for he is* 2 Chron. good, *for his Mercy endureth for ever;* V. 13. and then the House was fill'd with a Cloud, so that the Priests could not stand to minister by reason of the Cloud, for the Glory of the Lord fill'd the House of God.

God has crown'd it with eminent *Successes* and Blessings: *Jehosaphat's* Singers went before the Army, praising the *Beauty of Holiness*, and 2 Chron. their Enemies slew one another; XX. 21. and he ascrib'd his Victory more to the Divine Song, than to the Military Sword.

God has set the Broad Seal of Heaven to it by *Miracle and Conversion* at once, confirming thereby its Divine Original, its Efficacy and Power upon the Heart: Paul and Silas sung Praise at Mid-Act. XVI. night, the Foundations shook, the 26. Prison-Doors were open'd, every man's Bands were loos'd, and the Jailor converted. First Nature trembled, and

Ser. VI. and then the *Failor's* Heart; which  
 ~~~~~ shows this way of praising God  
 to be a means of Grace. Here
 were *Songs in the Night without a*
Figure, and Musick that moves the
Stones themselves without a Fiction.

§. 5. *It's an Ordinance against*
which Satan and his Agents have ex-
press'd a great deal of Rage; and for
which, on the other hand, good Peo-
ple have always had an high Value
and Esteem.

It has been very much the Ob-
 ject of Satan's Spite and Persecu-
 tion; and therefore our Neglect
 would fall in with the Design of
 the Enemy of God's Glory, and
 our Salvation. I may venture to
 say, that *this Ordinance* has had
 its *Martyrs and Confessors* too, as
 well as the other Parts of our no-
 ble Religion. The following In-
 stances will at least show a mighty
 Value for this Ordinance.

In the Reign of *Julian the Apo-*
state, when the *Oracle of Daphne*
 (or they that manag'd it) was dis-

Dr. Cave's *turb'd that the Bones of Babylas*
Life of Ba- the Martyr lay so near it; the
by las.

Christians were order'd to remove
 them,

them; and *Theodorus*, a godly Ser. VI. young Man, at the Head of the Company, brought away his Coffin, singing as they went that part of Psalm XCVII. where 'tis said, *Confounded be all they that worship graven Images.* *Julian* inrag'd, commanded the Ringleader to be apprehended; 'twas done: *Theodorus* is seiz'd, and tortur'd from Morning to Night with variety of unparallel'd Crueltys, and a Succession of fresh Tormentors; and tho he was taken up for singing a Psalm in contempt of the Emperor's Religion, yet while he was upon the Rack, and the Tormentors plying him on every side, he continu'd with a chearful Countenance to sing the same over again, *Confounded be all they that worship graven Images.* The other is that of *Publia*, who, as *Julian* pass'd by, would sing Psalm CXV. 4. *Their Idols are Silver and Gold, the Works of Mens Hands; they that makethem are like unto them:* and when commanded to be silent, especially when the Emperor pass'd by, she sung on Psalm LXVIII. 1. *Let God arise,*

Ser. VI. *arise, and let his Enemys be scatter'd.* Enrag'd at this, the *Apostate* commanded her to be brought before him, and beaten till she was all bloody : all which she took as the highest Honour, went back to her House, and continu'd to sing with those about her. Her Behaviour in this I am not here to dispute, I mention it only as an Instance of a zealous Adherence to this part of her Religion, singing of Psalms.

The Value of the Primitive Christians for this Duty was so great, that when they met in the greatest Dangers, and in the Night, this nevertheless made a part of their Worship : And by one that liv'd near the *second Century*, we are told, that 'twas then among the Marks of a *Christian*, that he was one that prais'd God with Thanksgiving and singing of Psalms ; and that the holy Souls of that time were continually blessing, and praising, presenting Hymns to God, and singing Psalms. Praise is the very Breath of the new Creature, and can it ever be wholly stopt in a living

Plin. Ep. ad Traj.
 Δὲ εὐχαριστίας καὶ ψαλμωδίας. Clem.
 Alex. Ἀεὶ αἰνῶσα, ὑμνῶσα, εὐλογῶσα, ᾄδουσα, ᾠδὴν ἀλλοδαμήν.
 Id. Strom. lib. 6.

living Soul? Surely the Righteous *Ser. VI.*
shall give Thanks unto thy Name. *Ps. CXL.*

When all the World is call'd upon
to do so, 'twou'd be strange for
them to be silent.


Awake my Glory; q. d. it's the
Glory of a good Man, that when
his Mind is tun'd, his Soul can go
up with his Song, and is able to
mount above the Attraction of
worldly Pleasures, and the Impres-
sion of worldly Occurrences, glo-
rying in the Lord: *My Glory* I do
not place in my Nomination to
the Kingdom, nor in my military
Skill, nor in my Relation to King
Saul; but that I have a *fix'd Heart*
and a *ready Tongue* to sing and give
Praise.

Other Christians have chosen
rather to endure all Torments
than quit the Practice, and give up
the Ordinance.

And at the time of the *Refor-* *Hist. of*
mation you might, both in *England* *Reform.*
and *France*, distinguish *Papists* and *vol. 2. p.*
Protestants by their enmity against *94.*
this Duty, or Value for it. When
England began to shake off *Rome*,
we are told, by a learned Writer,
“ That

Ser. VI. " That Mens Affections to the
 ~~~~~ " Work of Reformation were  
 " every where measur'd by their  
 " singing or not singing of the  
 " translated Psalms. And as to  
*France*, when *Clement Marot*, a  
*Courtier* and a *Poet*, had consecra-  
 ted his *Muse* to God, and tran-  
 slated about fifty of *David's*  
 Psalms into French Metre; *Beza*  
 did an hundred more, and all the  
 Scripture-Songs: *Lewis Guadimet*,  
 the *Asaph* or *Jeduthun* of that Age,  
 skilfully set them to those melo-  
 dious Tunes that are sung to this  
 day. This holy Ordinance so  
 charm'd the Ears and Affections of  
 all, that it gave a mighty Spread  
 to the Reformation, and contri-  
 buted greatly to the Propagation  
 of the Gospel. Persons of all  
 Ranks sung Psalms, not only in  
 the Temples, but in their Familys;  
 and no Gentleman of the Re-  
 form'd Religion would sit down  
 at his Table without praising God,  
 by singing a Psalm: and they  
 made it a special Part of their  
 Morning and Evening-Worship.  
 The Rage of the Popish Clergy a-  
 gainst

Synod. in  
 Gallia-Re-  
 form. vol.  
 I. p. 5.

gainst this was no wonder, but Ser. VI.  
the manner of managing their   
Opposition was remarkable, and  
the Alarm that it gave them.

'Twas represented to the *King*, Beze Hist.  
that the *Church was falling*, and Eccl. de  
that the *Magistrate* was going to France,  
be depos'd, and that the *Lutherans* Part I. p.  
were raising Sedition, because 141, 142.  
they sung Psalms; tho the Psalms  
for the *King's Majesty*, and the  
Prosperity of the Kingdom were  
always sung first: Whereupon the  
singing of Psalms was prohibited  
all the Kingdom over.

But their usual Methods of Force  
and Violence were not the only  
Opposition they made to this Or-  
dinance: Profane Songs were in-  
courag'd, *Catullus* and *Tibullus* were  
brought into the Field against *Da-  
vid* and *Asaph*; and the Ribaldry  
of those *obscene Poets*, whom the  
Cardinal of *Lorain* had procur'd Synodicon  
to be translated, and sung in the <sup>at supra.</sup>  
Court, was oppos'd to the teach-  
ing and *admonishing one another in*  
*Psalms, Hymns, and spiritual Songs*:  
as if they were conscious who  
were the best Allys to their Cause,  
those



Ser. VI. those inspir'd from Heaven, or those from Hell; and that the *Romish Church* had less to fear from the Profaness of those wanton Poets, than from the singing *David's Psalms with Grace in the Heart*.

It's certain, that if this Ordinance had had fair play, *Popery* would have been driven out by it, as surely as the *evil Spirit* in *Saul* fled before *David's Harp*, or the *Ammonites* before *Jehoshaphat's Singers*. No wonder then 'twas one of the first things struck at, both when the *Reformation* was first begun, and the Extirpation of our Religion more lately design'd, and carry'd on in *France* by the *Great Persecutor* of this Day, in comparison of whom the *Nero's* and *Dioctlesian's* of old were harmless and modest Names.


Les Plain-  
tes des  
Protest.  
cruellem.  
opprimes  
en Franc.  
M. Claud.

Singing Psalms was always an insupportable Part of our Worship to the *Popish Clergy*: They omitted no Endeavours to deprive the *Protestants* of this Consolation by several *Edicts*. Some forbidding Singing in private *Houses*; some commanding them to cease Sing-  
ing,

ing, even in their *Churches*, when Ser. VI. the Sacrament past by, or at the time of any Procession. But at length, when the Project of destroying the Reform'd was ripe for execution, they got it universally prohibited by an *Arrest of Council* in the year 1661. Then it was criminal to sing Psalms either in publick or private, upon penalty of 500 *Livres*; their Psalm-Books were burnt publickly by the common Hangman, and several were beaten and sent to Prison for praising God that way: as if *David's Psalms* were a very naughty Book, and not so fit to be trusted with the common People as *Catullus* and *Tibullus*.

Hereupon criminal Processes were form'd against several, who made no more difficulty of violating this Order, than *Daniel* did with respect to that Decree which forbade him to pray to his God.

A *Protestant Minister* publish'd a little Book in the Defence of singing Psalms, and to show the injustice and Impiety of these Prohibitions, and the Obligations that  
all

 Ser. VI. all Christians are under to sing the Praises of God: 'Twas order'd, by another *Arrest of Council*, Ann. 1663. that his *Book* should be *burnt*, the Author *banish'd* for a Year, and render'd incapable of exercising his Ministry during that time; and that the *Bookseller*, who printed it, should not only be *banish'd* for two Years, but should pay 300 *Livres*; and neither he, nor any of his *Family*, should ever *keep Shop* any more: which was executed accordingly. But notwithstanding these Declarations, and the Severity with which they were executed, so vast a number continu'd to sing Psalms both in their Houses and elsewhere, that those *Judges* who had any Remains of Honour or Conscience, were asham'd to execute always the Severity of these *Edicts*: Yet they continu'd in full force, and as the *Persecution* increas'd, they redoubled the rigorous Execution of these Prohibitions against singing of Psalms.

Hist. Apol.  
 ch. 18.

Among others, 'twas a noble  
 Testimony born to this Ordinance  
 by

by an *Artisan*, of the Town of Ser. VI.  
*Castres* in the *Upper Languedoc*:  
When an *Officer* shew'd him the  
Declaration against singing *Psalms*,  
he confounded the *Adversary*, by  
subscribing at the bottom no other  
Answer than this, with his own  
Hand: *Psal. XXXIV. 1. I will bless*  
*the Lord at all times, his Praise*  
*shall be continually in my Mouth.*

*In their Version:*


Jamais ne Cesserai,  
De Magnifier, le Seigneur,  
En ma Bouche aurai son Honeur  
Tant que vivant serai.

*Tate and Brady:*

*Thro all the changing Scenes of*  
*Life,*

*In Trouble, or in Joy,*  
*The Praises of my God, shall still*  
*My Heart and Tongue employ.*

This was indeed with *David* to  
say, *While I live I will praise the*  
*Lord; I will sing Praises to my God*  
*while I have my Being.* As if *Da-*  
*vid* liv'd by the *Breath of Praise*,  
and desir'd to live no longer than  
he could do so. I

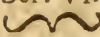
Ser. VI. I may be allow'd to mention, as  
 a further Instance of a mighty  
*Short Hist. of Revolut. of Orange.* value for this Ordinance, the *Peo-  
 ple of Orange*; who when the me-  
 lancholy News was brought them  
 that they were abandon'd to the  
*French Cruelty* without Relief, and  
 that they must leave their Habi-  
 tations and Country, they were  
 resolv'd to *part with a Psalm*:  
 and judging it to be the last Li-  
 berty they should have of assem-  
 bling in the *Church*, thither they  
 all repair in Crowds, and melting  
 into Tears: The *Minister*, who  
 preach'd that day, caus'd the  
 List Psalm to be sung kneeling;  
 Sing they would, tho they were  
 interrupted with a great many  
 Sighs, and Sobs and Tears.

Shall they sing thus in the Fur-  
 nace of Affliction, and glorify  
 God in the midst of the Fires?  
 Shall they not only offer the Sacri-  
 fice of Praise, but make themselves  
 a Sacrifice rather than omit it?  
 And will not their Singing up-  
 braid our Silence and Neglect?  
 Blessed be God we are not call'd  
 to be *Martyrs* for the Ordinance,  
 nor



nor to *sing the Songs of the Lord in Ser. VI.*  
*a strange Land,* and in the want of all things: Nay in the want of all things (says a great Soul) should we praise the Lord; tho he has taken away every thing else, if he hath not taken away Himself, who is greater and better than All. But where God has given all things pertaining to Life and Godliness, and fill'd the Mouth with good things, 'tis that the Lips should show forth his Praise, for our Personal, Family and Publick Mercys, in secret, in private, and in publick.

(1.) *Sometimes secretly, and alone by our selves.* David had his Songs in the Night, when alone; and several of his Psalms seem compos'd for his own *private Use*: And the *Apostle* says, *If any Man,* any particular Man by himself, *be merry, let him sing Psalms.* The Voice of Praise will sweeten Retirement, perfume the Closet, and bring down the best of Company to us, or carry up our Souls to that which is so: This has been found, by many a poor Sufferer,

Ser. VI. a strong Consolation in their dark  
 and solitary Dungeons and Prisons.

(2.) *In your Familys, supposing a competent Number, and capable Voices.* This moreover supposes Family-Worship (*i. e.*) that you are Christians, according to the Judgment of a great Person, whose words are these: “Constant Family-Worship is so necessary to keep alive a sense of God and Religion in the Minds of Men, that I see not how any Family, that neglects it, can in reason be esteem’d a Family of Christians, or indeed to have any Religion at all. And singing Psalms makes a refreshing enlivening part of that Worship, where it can be decently perform’d. That this was the Practice of the *Primitive Christians*, appears from several Testimonys produc’d by the learned Author of the *Enquiry into the Constitution and Discipline of the Primitive Church*: They sung Psalms at their Meals, and at their Festivals. *Tertullian* inveighing against Marriage with

ABp Til-  
lotson’s

Sermon of

Family-  
Religion.

Part II.

c. I.

Clem.

Alex.

with Unbelievers, from the pre-Ser. VI.  
 judice such an unequal Yoke would  
 be to Family-Religion, takes particular notice of this Branch of it, of singing \* Psalms: *What Jar and Discord must Vanity and Profaneness be to this heavenly Musick of a Soul divinely tun'd?* And afterwards describing the Happy † Pair whom Love and Religion have united, he mentions this Part among the other Harmonys of such a Condition, *That they sing together* (sup-<sup>r</sup> Pct. III. posing Ability) *as Heirs of the 7. Grace of Life; neither their Prayers, nor their Psalms were hinder'd.* This was formerly more the Practice of good People, than 'tis now; and in later times, when Family-Religion was not so unfashionable a thing.

One of the *Ministers*, in a *Farewel-Sermon*, tells his Hearers, “ That he cou'd remember the  
 “ time when a Person, on a Lord's  
 “ Day, might hear a continu'd

---

\* Quid Maritus suus illi, vel marito quid illa cantabit? † Sonant inter duos Psalmi & Hymni, &c.

Ser. VI. " Melody of Psalms, in walking

~~~~~ " from one end of this City to

" the other. It's certain there are Family-Mercys and Blessings that call for Family-Praises, as well as publick and personal. *David* seems to mark the good Man's

Psalms
CXVIII.
15.

Door with this Inscription, *The Voice of Rejoycing and of Salvation is in the Tabernacles of the Righteous ;*

ps. XXX. and he compos'd a *Psalms* on purpose for the dedicating of his

Deut. XX. own *House*. Under the Law every

5. House was dedicated : Dedication and Worship make a Church, and by this 'twill be known that there is a Church in thy House.

Mr. Philip And as a *Man of God* us'd to say,

Henry's " This is the way to hold forth

Life. " Godliness, like *Rahab's* scarlet

" Thread, to such as pass by our

" Windows. And as the same

excellent Man us'd to say, " They

" do well who pray Morning and

" Evening in their Familys, but

" they do better who pray and

" read the Scriptures ; but they

" do best of all, who pray, and

" read, and sing Psalms : and

" Christians should covet earnest-

" ly

“ ly the best Gifts. This was his Ser. VI.
own daily Practice, which he ma-
nag’d so as to make it a Pleasure,
and not a Task to Children and
Servants; seldom long, never te-
dious: for he had an excellent Fa-
culty of rendring Religion the
most sweet and amiable Employ-
ment in the World.

It’s a Trifle to object we are
afraid of being overheard, and
that we shall only entertain the
Banter of a scoffing World. In-
deed a prudent Man will order his
Affairs with Discretion, and Wis-
dom is profitable to direct; but
examine, whether this is not be-
ing asham’d of God and his Way.
May not your Example and Prac-
tice do good to others? Has not
your own Heart been warm’d
and affected when you have gone
by and heard a Family so im-
ploy’d? I shall only add, That if
Paul and *Silas* had been afraid of
being overheard, the Jailor might
never have been converted.

(3.) *Awake your Glory, and sing
to God in Publick, with the united
Voices of the Congregation. Let us*

Ser. VI. *come before his Presence with Thanksgiving, and make a joyful Noise unto him with Psalms; and praise him in the midst of the great Congregation.*

Ps. XCV. 2.

*Be this the Burden of your Song,
In full Assemblys bless the Lord;
All who to Israel's Tribe belong,
The God of Israel's Praise record.*

Psal. Tate.

I close all with an Address to two sorts of Persons.

First, You that are yet unsatisfy'd and unconvinc'd, have a care of a censorious judging Spirit, or reproachful Language: don't give way to any Estrangedness from your Brethren upon this account. Your differing Opinion in this Matter ought not to drive you from the Communion of those that practise Singing; because you are not forc'd to sing with them, but may be meditating all the while; and because of the indispensable Duty all Christians are under to allow each other the Liberty of Conscience. If a Congregation should

should be equally divided for, and Ser. VI. against this; I can see no Reason why the one should say to the others, you shall not sing, while the Singers do not force it upon the Refusers; but according to Rule, *Leave them that are otherwise minded, till God shall reveal it*; and yet *whereto we have attain'd walking together*. I am not utterly a Stranger to the Twistings and Turnings us'd to evade this; but be open to Conviction: Strain not for Difficultys: Do not make an hard shift to remain unsatisfy'd, while some may without Censure be suppos'd to practise many things in Religion upon less Evidence and weaker Proof. Omit not the Methods of Information, Reading, Prayer and Converse; and when your Objections are fairly answer'd, let not Prejudice or Custom step up to the Breach, and maintain the Ground against a friendly Attack; in yielding to which you'll afterwards see Reason to sing a Triumph over your own Defeat.

You!

Ser. VI. You that are *satisfy'd*, let not
 ~~~~~ your Souls be *untun'd* by any  
 slights that may be put upon it by  
 the Profane on the one hand, or  
 the Mistaken on the other. It  
 sounds odd to you, the making it  
 a Question, whether we should  
 sing God's Praises or no? but let  
 it not surprize you that this Or-  
 dinance has its Enemys. Exercise  
 a Candour and Love towards those  
 you count mistaken; and tho you  
 cannot, must not carry it so far  
 as to sacrifice a plain Duty to their  
 Prejudice, neither let your Zeal  
 for one Duty eat up the other of  
 Charity and Forbearance. Be true  
 to your own Principles, and allow  
 a Latitude to others.

Let your gracious Frame, and  
 serious manner of performing it,  
 and your spiritual Improvement  
 by it, do an Honour to the Ordi-  
 nance, and recommend it to o-  
 thers.

Always admire the Grace and  
 Goodness of God in a Mediator,  
 that does not disdain to accept of  
 such Praises as ours. Admire that  
 any

any thing we can do should be Ser. VI.  
call'd *Service*, and that any thing  
we can say should be call'd *Praise*.  
When the *Sons of the Morning* still  
*sing together*, and continually sur-  
round his Throne with unspotted  
Hallelujahs; yet he says to a  
Worm, *Let me hear thy Voice*, for Cant. II.  
'tis pleasant. Certainly this is to  
the end that my Glory should not  
be silent, but should sing and give  
*Praise*. With *David's* Resolve;

P S A L M.

**I**N praising God, while he pro-  
longs

*My Breath*, I will that *Breath*  
imploy:

*And join Devotion to my Songs,*  
*Sincere as is in him my Joy.*

*While*

Ser. VI.

*While Sinners from Earth's Face  
are hurl'd,**My Soul, praise thou his Holy  
Name:**Till, with my Song, the listning  
World**Join Consort, and his Praise pro-  
claim.*

Tate.

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